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Winter 1991 Number 55 $4.50

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Number 55

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Published quarterly by The Heritage Foundation, *Policy Review* is a forum for conservative debate on the major political issues of our time. The views in *Policy Review* are those of the authors. They do not necessarily reflect the views of the editorial board or of The Heritage Foundation.

Correspondence should be sent to *Policy Review*, 214 Massachusetts Avenue, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002. Telephone: (202) 546-4400. Requests to reprint more than short quotations should be addressed to the Managing Editor. Send address changes to *Policy Review*, Subscription Manager. Subscription rates are $18 for one year, $34 for two years, $48 for three years. Add $8 a year for foreign air-speeded delivery.

Policy Review is indexed by the Public Affairs Information Service and the Social Sciences Index. *Policy Review* has been copyrighted in 1991 by The Heritage Foundation and is available on NEXIS. ISSN 0146-5945. National distributor: B. DeBoer, 113 E. Central Street—Rear, Nutley, New Jersey 07110, (201) 667-9300.

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Bull Moose Revolt

George Bush and the Shadow of William Howard Taft

Burton Yale Pines

The shadow of William Howard Taft is falling across the presidency of George Bush. Like Taft, Bush was hand-picked by his predecessor. Both were seen as heirs of their predecessors' popular legacies and champions of their successful policies. Both thus took office with enormous reservoirs of public good will.

The story of Taft's subsequent self-destruction is one of the best-known political dramas of American history. He surprised, then disillusioned, and finally angered much of his party. Ultimately he was defeated in his quest for a second term when his predecessor, Theodore Roosevelt, returned to politics and ran against him in the 1912 presidential election. They split the Republicans and allowed Democrat Woodrow Wilson to sneak into the White House with just 42 percent of the popular vote.

The Bush presidency seems to be heading in the same direction. Just as the legions of Roosevelt supporters turned on Taft for betraying Roosevelt's hard-won victories, so are Ronald Reagan's legions tempted to turn on Bush. As in 1912, a revolt would be conducted with profound sadness and anguish. Yet there almost surely will be a revolt if George Bush and his most senior White House aides continue to repudiate the Reagan legacy as they have done in the past year. Bush's very poor showing in this November's congressional elections is merely the warning tremor of an approaching political earthquake. It can be prevented. But this requires Bush to return to the policies, principles, and politics that gave Reagan and then Bush three landslide victories. If Bush and his advisors keep to their current course, they are asking for the one-term presidency of William Howard Bush.

Roosevelt's Heartbreak

When Teddy Roosevelt, known to history as TR, left office in March 1909 after nearly eight years in the White House, he was the most popular president in memory. He was entrusting the presidency to his Secretary of War and protege, Taft, who handily had defeated Democrat William Jennings Bryan in the 1908 elections. Writes David H. Burton in his 1972 biography of Roosevelt: "Taft had received his endorsement from the electorate to no small degree because he was expected to continue the policies of his predecessor. The public at large, along with Roosevelt, was of this mind." So was Taft. In a letter to Roosevelt soon after Taft's inauguration, the new president wrote: "I can never forget that the power that I now exercise was a voluntary transfer from you to me."

That TR was enthusiastic about his successor is beyond dispute; he told Taft in 1908 that he "would be the greatest president, bar only Washington and Lincoln." When the break between the two men later came, Taft openly wept and exclaimed: "Roosevelt was my closest friend." William Allen White in his autobiography writes that "it was heartbreaking to watch that gradual, apparently inevitable estrangement between two old friends, for Roosevelt and Taft had been dearly beloved companions."

Shortly after Taft's inauguration, TR headed overseas, departing from Hoboken on the S.S. *Hamburg* for what he said would be "the joy of wandering through lonely lands, the joy of hunting the mighty and terrible lords [of Africa] where death broods in the dark and silent depths." For 14 months he exiled himself from American politics. His distance, writes his biographer I. E. Cadenhead Jr., was due in part to "his desire to give Taft a completely free hand in political matters."

Taft's Flip-Flop on Tariffs

Taft soon demonstrated, however, that he was no TR by repudiating the Roosevelt position on the most contentious issue of the day. Tariff policy was as central to the political debate then as tax policy is today. The 1908 GOP platform promised tariff reform, by which it meant the lowering of America's very high protective tariffs, and candidate Taft left no doubt that he would push for lower rates. In the special session of Congress called by him in March 1909 to deal with tariffs, the House passed reductions that Taft generally embraced. But when the measure reached the Senate, members from industrial states made 847 revisions to the House bill, almost all of them "reforming" tariffs by increasing them. At first, according to Cadenhead, Taft was appalled by this. Then,

Burton Yale Pines *is senior vice president of The Heritage Foundation and associate publisher of* Policy Review.

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gradually, he began listening to senators who argued that their 847 revisions were genuine tariff reform and, what was more convincing, that their bill "was all that could be gotten through a protectionist Senate." Ultimately, Taft agreed.

With Taft's implicit support and without a threat of his veto, the House grudgingly adopted the Senate's protectionist version of tariff reform. Taft then signed the measure and—to make matters much worse—in a September 17, 1909, speech in Winona, Minnesota, declared the new tariff package "the best bill that the Republican Party has ever passed."

On a second tariff matter, two years later, Taft again sided with protectionists. Most Republicans were furious and Taft managed to win what became a bruising battle only with the help of 31 of the Senate's 34 Democrats; embarrassingly, 24 of the Senate's 46 Republicans opposed him. Taft's conversion from low to high tariffs and his self-deception on this issue eerily foreshadow Bush's abandonment of his no-new-taxes pledge—potentially with the same political consequences.

"Utterly Helpless as a Leader"

On other issues Taft veered sharply from the Roosevelt legacy. Taft weakened TR's bold conservation programs and favored treaties, earlier opposed by TR, requiring the arbitration of international disputes.

Taft also personally differed enormously from Roosevelt. Burton's biography of Roosevelt explains that although Taft was "the ablest of lieutenants, he lacked the resolve appropriate to leadership....He allowed his legalistic interpretation to prevail over his political common sense and his generous heart." And politics itself, that possibly dismaying but essential ingredient of leadership, was distasteful to Taft. "Politics, when I am in it, makes me sick," he said. It is not surprising that during the 1908 campaign, TR had to exhort Taft: "Do not answer Bryan; attack him!" And later Taft admitted that throughout his years in the White House he never ceased to "feel just a bit like a fish out of water." Observed

Taft's conversion from low tariffs to high tariffs and his self-deception on this issue eerily foreshadow President Bush's abandonment of his no-new-taxes pledge.

Senator Jonathan P. Dolliver of Iowa: "Taft is an amiable island; entirely surrounded by men who know exactly what they want." The Roosevelt Progressives bitingly joked: "There stands Taft like the statue of Louis XV in the Tuileries Gardens, smiling and formidable, but

The Bettmann Archive

Taft (right), like Bush, was hand-picked by his popular predecessor and initially seen as his political heir.

without heart or guts."

In distant Africa, meantime, TR began receiving worrisome signals of what was happening in the White House. Recalls White in his autobiography: "We...sent messengers into the African jungle to tell him to beware of the change that had come over the leadership of the party." Later, from Italy in April 1910, TR wrote to Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, the Massachusetts Republican, that he was growing concerned about political developments in the United States and that, in the 1910 mid-term elections, he would not campaign for those who had abandoned "the great principles which I regard as essential." Roosevelt added that he hoped that Taft could and would retrieve himself.

By that August, TR was confiding to Theodore Roosevelt Jr. that Taft was "utterly helpless as a leader," that the split in the GOP was "as wide and as deep as it could be," and that Taft could not heal it. Days later, TR set off on a whirlwind trip through 16 western states. Writes Cadenhead: "He was met by throngs of supporters at every stop, some of whom stood for hours in the rain or scorching sunshine to see and hear their hero." Upon returning East, TR arranged to meet Taft. Instead of patching up differences, however, their one-hour meeting in New Haven revealed how irreconcilable the situation had become. Both left with differing versions of what had been said. Still, according to Cadenhead, TR "was

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Roosevelt had to turn his back on an administration that had abandoned Republican principles.

not prepared to publicly denounce Taft." Writes White: "Neither of them wanted to fight."

TR's Mounting Frustration

Then came the final disillusionment—the 1910 mid-term elections. Across the country, Republicans lost what once had been solid, safe seats. The only region where the party held its own was the West, the Roosevelt stronghold. GOP House seats plummeted from 219 to 161, while the Democrats jumped from 172 to 228—the most Democratic seats gained since 1891, giving them control of the House for the first time since 1893.

After this mid-term debacle, the next step was predictable: organized Republican opposition to Taft. On January 21, 1911, the National Progressive Republican League officially was launched. Its aim was to make the GOP platform more progressive and to deny Taft the party's 1912 presidential nomination. Sponsoring the league were eight senators, six governors, and a number of congressmen. Still TR was not willing to break openly with Taft. In summer 1911, writes Cadenhead, TR "was reconciled to [Taft's] renomination."

But TR's frustration and anger continued to mount. And by late January 1912, he had decided to challenge the president. Partly at Roosevelt's instigation, the GOP governors of Kansas, Michigan, Missouri, Nebraska, New Hampshire, West Virginia, and Wyoming wrote TR urging him to announce that he would accept his party's presidential nomination. On February 21, he told a reporter in Ohio that "my hat is in the ring." Three days later he formally responded to the governors' letter, saying that yes, he would accept the GOP nomination. At about the same time, a handful of senators and a dozen other Roosevelt supporters gathered in Washington's Willard Hotel to discuss strategy. There, for the first time, they raised the fateful question: "If we lose the fight for the GOP nomination, do we bolt the party?" The question hung in the air without an explicit answer. Yet the threat to Taft was clear.

Roosevelt that spring set out to campaign for the nomination. With the GOP establishment solidly for Taft, TR went directly to the grass roots, concentrating on California, Illinois, Minnesota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and the other seven states that chose their convention delegates by direct primary. He was extremely successful, winning 1,157,397 popular votes to Taft's 761,716; he even humiliated Taft by taking the president's home state of Ohio by a two-to-one margin. These primaries gave Roosevelt 278 delegates to Taft's 46. (Senator Robert La Follette won 36.) Although the GOP machines in the South and in the other convention states by and large delivered delegates to Taft, historians agree that TR was the choice of Republican voters.

From this mounting political storm Taft seemed, as has Bush, strangely insulated. According to White, Taft was "so insensitive to the currents of public opinion...the returns from the presidential primary elections did not shake him. He seemed to have no faith in the Republican rank and file....It was a stone wall that the Republican masses met that spring. Is it strange that the leadership of those masses supporting Roosevelt went berserker in rage as they approached the solid, unyielding walls of that fortress?"

"We Stand at Armageddon"

Roosevelt headed for the June Republican Convention in Chicago with at least 432 of the convention's 1,078 delegates. It was an impressive number, but still far short of the simple majority of 540 needed for the nomination. Equally impressive was Roosevelt's appearance in Chicago, breaking with the precedent that for decades had kept the leading contenders away from the convention city. Wherever Roosevelt went in Chicago he was cheered and crowds jammed his headquarters at the Congress Hotel. On convention eve, TR addressed his backers at the Chicago Auditorium. His speech answered the question that a half-year earlier had hung in the air at the Willard Hotel: if he did not win the GOP nomination, he vowed, he would form a new political party.

As convention opening day neared, tensions mounted. Nearly 1,000 policemen patrolled the Chicago Coliseum, the convention site, ready to keep order should the clash of the Taft and Roosevelt forces turn violent. Under colorful bunting, the railings around the speaker's rostrum were wrapped with barbed wire, presumably to stop the Roosevelt forces from physically taking control of the chair.

Taft's edge in delegate strength became apparent as the convention voted on procedural matters and on

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seating disputed delegations. Of 254 disputed seats, for example, all but about two dozen were awarded to Taft. Charging that he was cheated of legitimately elected delegates, Roosevelt told his delegates to keep their seats but to take no further part in convention business. Then, in one of the most-remembered statements of his long public career, he declared: "We stand at Armageddon, and we battle for the Lord."

By then the convention's outcome was certain. On the first ballot, Taft, who was nominated by former Ohio Lieutenant Governor Warren G. Harding, was chosen the GOP standard-bearer by 556 votes to TR's 107, with 41 votes going to Senator La Follette; 348 TR delegates abstained. The GOP platform, written by the Taft forces, strongly endorsed protective tariffs and concluded by inviting "the intelligent judgment of the American people upon the administration of William H. Taft."

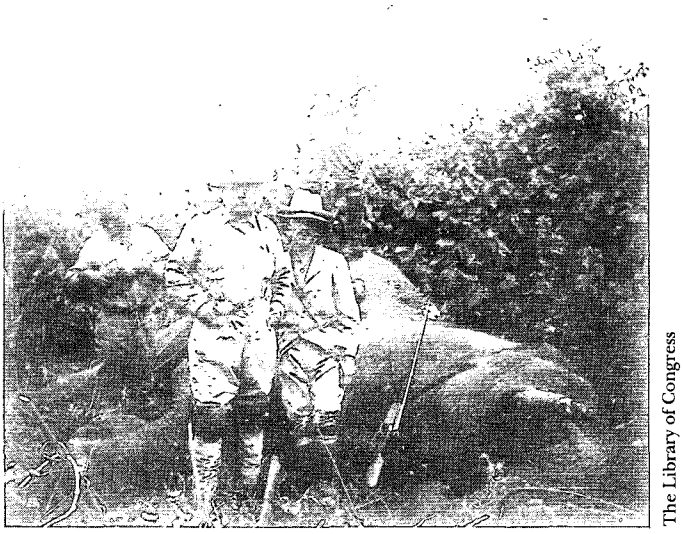
Roosevelt kept his vow of going into opposition. He returned to the Chicago Coliseum in early August for the National Progressive Party's convention, to which more than 2,000 delegates came from every state but South Carolina. Upon arriving in Chicago, Roosevelt was asked by reporters how he felt. His grinning reply: "I feel as strong as a bull moose!"—and so the nickname by which history knows the movement that repudiated and defeated a president who had repudiated his legacy and broken his trust.

By acclamation the delegates nominated Roosevelt for president and California Governor Hiram Johnson as his running mate. They also adopted a platform that declared that "the deliberate betrayal of its trust by the Republican Party and the fatal incapacity of the Democratic Party to deal with the new issues of the new times have compelled the people to forge a new instrument of government through which to give effect to their will in laws and institutions." The platform stated: "We demand tariff revision because the present tariff is unjust to the people of the United States....The Republican organization is in the hands of those who have broken, and cannot be trusted to keep, the promise of necessary downward [tariff] revision."

Open opposition would allow conservatives to go solidly on the record against the betrayals of the Bush administration.

"Do We Bolt the Party?"

History, of course, runs no exact replays and too much must not be made of historical parallels. For one thing, there is no Teddy Roosevelt today; even if Ronald Reagan wanted to challenge Bush, the Constitution bars a third Reagan term. For another, TR and his Progressives offer no model for policy prescriptions; their platform called for massive amounts of government intrusion into the economy.



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While Roosevelt was killing elephants in Africa, Taft was killing the party of the elephant at home.

Yet, while the details of Roosevelt's torpedoing of Taft cannot guide us today, the dynamics can. As in 1912, the responsible response to a party leader who betrays the party cannot be silence; it must be open criticism, possibly opposition, and maybe even rebellion. In the air must hang that question of the Willard Hotel: "Do we bolt the party?" As in 1912, there is great merit in opposition even if immediate election victory is unlikely and even if it may give the Democrats near-term gains.

Open opposition would allow conservatives to go solidly on the record against the betrayals of the Bush administration. Open opposition would challenge the White House's monopoly on defining what a Republican (or even a conservative) is. Open opposition would show the public that conservatives are not responsible for nor even associated with the economic and other disasters toward which Bush and his top advisors are driving the nation. Open opposition gives conservatives a chance to escape being unjustly tainted by the Bush administration. And open opposition gives conservatives a vehicle for their message and a structure for reforging coalitions.

Far worse would it be for conservatives to fume silently for the next two or perhaps (although unlikely) six years. Timid silence would convince the public that conservatives endorse what Bush is doing, that Bush represents conservatives and that conservatives are to blame for the painful consequences of Bush's actions. Far better was the Bull Moose courage to say: We are not Taft—and Taft and his tight inner circle are not us.

The time is at hand for conservatives to decide if they will stand against their party's leader. The time too is at hand for George Bush to decide. It is late, but in this 11th hour Bush still can choose whether he will become William Howard Taft or whether he will save his presidency by switching direction, cleaning house, and rebuilding the victorious Reagan coalition. Conservatives are ready to welcome Bush back. He need only return.

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The Parent Trap

So Many Bills, So Little Time

William R. Mattox Jr.

Contrary to the assertions of professional children's advocates in Washington, the number one problem facing American children today is not lack of subsidized day-care centers, nutrition programs, or after-school care for "latchkey" kids. It's not even economic poverty, although 20 percent of American children live below the official poverty line. The biggest problem facing American children is a deficit of another kind—a deficit that is at least as serious as the budget or trade deficits. The biggest problem facing American children today is a lack of time with and attention from their parents.

Parents today spend 40 percent less time with their children than did parents in 1965, according to data collected from personal time diaries by sociologist John Robinson of the University of Maryland. In 1965, parents on average spent approximately 30 hours a week with their kids. By 1985, parent-child interaction had dropped to just 17 hours a week.

This incredible decline in family time can be attributed to increases in the number of single-parent families and in the total number of hours two-parent families devote to paid employment. A true "pro-child" policy would seek to combat the economic and cultural forces behind these trends, rather than trying to replace families with government programs.

A growing number of scholars and policy analysts recognize this. Indeed, pro-family conservatives are hardly alone these days in emphasizing the primacy of the family.

"Government, no matter how effective and how important and how necessary, can never, never substitute for strong families," writes David Blankenhorn, president of the Institute for American Values. "If we want to reinvest and strengthen families, it has to be through families, not simply through government programs as a replacement for what we see as a family failure."

In a landmark 1990 report, William Galston and Elaine Ciulla Kamarck of the Progressive Policy Institute echo this sentiment:

> Government cannot, under any set of conditions, provide the kind of nurturance that children, particularly young children, need. Given all the money in the world, government programs will not be able to instill self-esteem, good study habits, advanced language skills, or sound moral values in children as effectively as can strong families.... Government will never have the resources or the ability to replace what children lose when they lose supportive families. This suggests that the focus of public policy should be to look for ways to create *stable* families, not *substitute* families.

Despite this increasing awareness of the crucial importance of the family, some professional children's advocates remain fixated on federal programs. Early drafts of a report to be released this spring by the bipartisan National Commission on Children suggest that the commission is apt to portray children as an underfunded client class of the welfare state rather than as unique individuals whose well-being is best served when they are raised in strong families. Moreover, it appears likely that the commission will urge lawmakers to create and expand government programs that both take over family functions and require parents to spend more of their time working to generate enough taxes to pay for these programs.

This is no way to promote the welfare of American children. If policymakers really want to help our next generation, they should promote stronger "family" policy. They need to recognize that while government cannot strongarm Americans into being good parents, government can promote certain policies that make it easier for parents to give their children more of that increasingly precious commodity—time.

Fast-Track Families

The American family today lives in a time-pressure cooker. "On the fast track of two-career families in the go-go society of modern life, the most rationed commodity in the home is time," observes syndicated columnist Suzanne Fields. Accordingly, today's family

William R. Mattox Jr. *is a policy analyst who focuses on work and family issues for the Family Research Council. He lives in Washington, D.C., with his wife and two children.*

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schedules are often quite complex.

"Increasingly, family schedules are intricate applications of time-motion principles, with everything engineered to the minute and with every piece designed to fall in the right place at the right time," says Barbara Dafoe Whitehead, a social historian who has done extensive field research on how families organize and manage their time. "When a shoe is lost, or a cold car engine fails to turn over, or the baby fills his diaper just after he's been zipped into his snowsuit, or the staff meeting runs late, the whole intricate schedule can unravel and fall apart."

Parents employ a variety of time-management strategies to meet their work and family responsibilities. In roughly one-third of all two-income families today—one-half of those with preschoolers—spouses work complementary shifts to maximize the amount of time children are cared for by at least one parent. The most common "tag-team" arrangement is one in which the father works a standard 9-to-5 job and the mother works part-time in the evenings or on weekends.

Photofest

Other two-income households work concurrent shifts. Families in which the youngest child is of school age often choose this strategy to minimize the amount of time parents are unavailable to children during non-school hours. Same-shift arrangements are also common among families in which both parents have a high attachment to their careers and in those in which limited employment opportunities leave few alternatives.

Whether couples adopt a tag-team arrangement or a same-shift strategy, two-income households spend considerably less time with their children than do breadwinner–homemaker households. (Of course, there are certainly some traditional families that suffer from father absence due to the time-demanding nature of the sole breadwinner's work.) This discrepancy is most pronounced in maternal time with children. In fact, research by University of Virginia sociologists Steven Nock and Paul William Kingston shows that employed mothers of preschool children on average spend less than half as much time with their children as do full-time mothers at home. Some suggest that employed mothers spend a higher proportion of their time on "high quality" child-centered activities like playing with dolls, going to the park, or reading *Green Eggs and Ham*. But Nock and Kingston do not find this to be the case.

Paternal time with children suffers as well. In fact, one study found that fathers in two-income households spend less time with their young children than do fathers in single-earner households, largely because guilt-ridden same-shift wives "essentially push the dads out of the way in their rush to spend time with baby at the end of the day."

Moreover, same-shift couples with preschool children make extensive use of center-based group day-care programs, a fact that concerns many child development experts. Harvard University's Burton White believes day-care centers are ill-equipped to provide "large doses of custom-made love" kids need to thrive. And Bryna Siegal of Stanford University observes that children placed in day-care at an early age tend to be more conformist and peer-dependent than other children.

Singled Out

Time pressures can be especially daunting for single parents—and especially harmful to their children. Children in single-parent homes usually receive less parental attention, affection, and supervision than other children. Not only is one parent absent from the home (and research by sociologist Frank Furstenberg shows that three-fourths of all children of divorce have contact with their fathers less than two days a month), but the other parent is overloaded with money-making and household tasks. Indeed, Robinson's data show that, on average, single mothers spend one-third less time each week than married mothers in primary child-care activities such as dressing, feeding, chauffeuring, talking, playing, or helping with homework.

Moreover, children in single-parent families often have very irregular schedules. One study found that preschool children of single mothers sleep two fewer hours a night on average than their counterparts in two-parent homes, in part because harried mothers find it difficult to maintain a consistent bedtime routine.

This lack of household order and predictable routine negatively affects child development. "I don't think we can escape the conclusion that children need structure and oftentimes the divorce household is a chaotic scene," writes psychologist John Guidubaldi.

The time deficits in single-parent households are aggravated by the devastating emotional effects of divorce on children. It is little wonder that, when compared with children in two-parent families, children in single-parent homes have lower measures of academic achievement and increased levels of depression, stress, anxiety, aggression, mental illness, substance abuse, juvenile delinquency, youth gang membership, and other physical, emotional, and behavioral problems.

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Starved for Attention

Kids aren't just missing out on time with their parents. Today's fast-paced family life is also eroding the development of other aspects of what sociologist David Popenoe of Rutgers University says "is arguably the ideal child-rearing environment":

> a relatively large family that does a lot of things together, has many routines and traditions, and provides a great deal of quality contact time between adults and children; regular contact with relatives, active neighboring in a supportive neighborhood, and contact with the world of work; little concern on the part of children that their parents will break up; and the coming together of all these ingredients in the development of a rich family subculture that has lasting meaning and strongly promulgates such family values as cooperation and sharing.

For example, eating dinner together is one time-honored family tradition some believe is on its way out. "The family meal is dead," columnist Jonathan Yardley writes. "Except on the rarest occasions—Christmas, Thanksgiving, certain religious holidays—when we reach down to the innermost depths of the tribal memory and summon up turkeys and pies, roasts and casseroles, we have given up on what was once a central element in American domestic life."

Research on the prevalence of regular family mealtimes is mixed—some reports claim as many as 80 percent of all families regularly dine together, while others suggest less than 35 percent do so. America's frozen food companies clearly place greater stock in the lower figures. Indeed, an industry spokesperson reports heat-and-eat microwavable dinners for children to prepare themselves are "the hottest new category in food products."

Whatever the virtues of microwavable meals and other convenience foods, there is reason to be concerned about children routinely feeding themselves. As Suzanne Fields observes, "The child who grazes, standing in front of a microwave eating his fried chicken, biscuits, or refried beans, won't starve, but he may suffer from an emotional hunger that would be better satisfied if only Mom and Dad were there to yell at him for every pea he slips onto the knife."

Sibling Revelry

Just as the family diet is being customized for each family member, Barbara Dafoe Whitehead points out that "today's family schedules are customized to fit each individual family—they are as unique as a fingerprint or a snowflake." Since family life no longer moves in common rhythms, parents are finding it increasingly difficult to build neighborhood friendships and support networks. What's more, children are experiencing less regular contact with their grandparents and other relatives, in part because extended families are increasingly scattered geographically.

Thanks to the birth dearth, American kids are also missing out on interaction with siblings. In 1975, 62 percent of all women aged 40 to 44 had given birth to three or more children over the course of their lifetime. In 1988, only 38 percent had done so. Moreover, the percentage of women giving birth to just one child rose from 9 to 15 percent over the same time period.

Some regard the decline in family size as a positive development, maintaining that children today receive more individualized attention from their parents than did children a generation ago.

Even if this were true—and sociologist Harriet Presser reports "not only are Americans having fewer children than ever before, they are spending less time with the children they have"—it can hardly be argued that a one-child family generally has as rich a family experience as a larger family. Even if an only child receives more individualized parental attention, he still misses out on the intimate joys of having brothers and sisters—playing wiffle ball in the backyard, exchanging gifts at Christmas time, double-teaming Dad in a wrestling match on the family room floor, attending a sibling's ballet recital, and (later in life) reminiscing about old times at family reunions.

Honey, I Shrunk the Paycheck

So how did American families run out of time? Growing economic pressures have a lot to do with the family time crisis.

One of the supreme ironies of recent economic developments is that while America has experienced steady growth in its gross national product, the economic pressures on families with children have risen significantly. How can it be that at the same time we hear so much about the longest peacetime economic expansion in our nation's history, we also hear talk that economic pressures have grown so much that many families today must have two incomes?

Wage stagnation is one big reason. During the 1970s and '80s, constant dollar earnings of American husbands grew at less than 1 percent per year compared with a real growth rate of 3 percent per year in the 1950s and '60s. Moreover, for some occupational and demographic groups—particularly non-supervisory workers and males under age 25—real wages have actually fallen since 1973.

Parents today spend 40 percent less time with their children than did parents in 1965.

While wages have stagnated, taxes have risen dramatically. In 1950, a median-income family of four paid 2 percent of its annual gross earnings to the federal government in income and payroll taxes. Today, it pays 24 percent. In addition, state and local taxes, on average, take another 8 percent from the family's gross income.

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Moreover, the erosion in the value of the personal exemption (the tax code's chief mechanism for adjusting tax liability to reflect differences in family size) has shifted more of the federal income tax burden onto the backs of families with dependents. Had the exemption kept pace with inflation since 1950, it would now be worth close to $7,000. Instead, it stands at $2,050.

The Money Pit

On top of this, families are finding their take-home pay does not go as far as it once did. As economist Sylvia Ann Hewlett puts it, families today are "like hamsters on a wheel," running hard just to keep up.

Over the past 25 years, increases in the cost of several major family expenses—housing, health care, transportation, and higher education—have significantly outpaced the general inflation rate. For example, Joseph Minarik of the Congressional Joint Economic Committee has calculated that the typical 30-year-old man could get a mortgage on a median-priced home in 1973 with 21 percent of his gross income. By 1987, a median-priced home mortgage would take 40 percent of a typical 30-year-old's gross income.

The cost of housing (which is typically a family's single greatest expense) is tied directly to crime rates and school districts. As crime rates have risen and school performance has declined, an under-supply of housing in good school districts with low crime rates has driven the price of housing in such neighborhoods way up. Thus, parents who value safety, education, and time with children must either live in areas with poorer schools and higher crime, or divert time from children to paid employment in order to purchase a home in a safe neighborhood with good schools—a quintessential Hobson's choice.

Finally, since the increased market labor of married women has resulted in decreased home production (fewer home-cooked meals, less maternal child-care, less home-sewn clothing), some of the economic growth experienced in recent years stems not from a real increase in productivity but from a shift from home production (which is not included in GNP calculations) to market production (which is). In other words, some of the economic growth in the United States in recent years is an illusion. Although one must be careful not to overstate this factor, the shift from home production to market production is part of the reason GNP gains have not eased the economic pressures on many families with children.

Perrier and Teddy Bears

Growing economic pressures aren't the only reason families have less time together. A number of cultural factors have also played a major role.

"Unbridled careerism" is partly responsible for the decline in family time, says Karl Zinsmeister of the American Enterprise Institute. "For years, one of the most cogent criticisms of American sex roles and economic arrangements has been the argument that many fathers get so wrapped up in earning and doing at the workplace that they become dehumanized, losing interest in the intimate joys of family life and failing to participate fairly in domestic responsibilities," he writes. "Now it appears workaholism and family dereliction have become equal opportunity diseases, striking mothers as much as fathers."

Everett Collection

Seventy-two percent of employed fathers say they are torn by conflict between their jobs and the desire to spend more time with their families.

The devaluation of mothering stands behind such trends. As Zinsmeister notes, "Today, women are more likely to be admired and appreciated for launching a catchy new ad campaign for toothpaste than they are for nurturing and shaping an original personality." Ironically, this has a detrimental impact on fathering as well. So long as child-rearing is viewed as a low calling for women, it is unlikely that it will take on increased significance for men.

Apart from unbridled careerism, some of the reduction in family time has been driven by a rampant materialism that places a higher premium on obtaining or retaining a "Perrier and Rolex life-style" than on investing time in a larger kin group.

"Increasingly, Americans are pursuing a selfish individualism that is inconsistent with strong families and strong communities," writes University of North Carolina sociologist Peter Uhlenberg. "This movement is fueled by the media, most especially television (both in its programming and advertising), which suggests that personal happiness is the highest good and that it can be achieved by pursuing pleasure and material goods."

Indeed, it has become all too common for parents to

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UPI/Bettmann Newsphotos

Margaret Thatcher, Sandra Day O'Connor, and Jeane Kirkpatrick are "sequencers" who took time off from employment when their children were young and later returned to their careers.

buy material goods for their children in an attempt to compensate for their frequent absence from the home. Harvard University child psychiatrist Robert Coles calls this the "teddy bear syndrome":

> Some of the frenzied need of children to have possessions isn't only a function of the ads they see on TV. It's a function of their hunger for what they aren't getting—their parent's time. The biggest change I have seen in 30 years of interviewing families is that children are no longer being cared for by their parents the way they once were. Parents are too busy spending their most precious capital—their time and their energy—struggling to keep up with MasterCard payments. They're depleted. They work long hours to barely keep up, and when they get home at the end of the day they're tired. And their kids are left with a Nintendo or a pair of Nikes or some other piece of crap. Big deal.

Swimming Upstream

Of course, not all parents are trying to "buy off" their children with Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles or overpriced sneakers. Many are struggling to raise responsible children and to transmit family values such as sharing, responsibility, commitment, and self-control. But these families are finding themselves swimming upstream against an increasingly unfriendly culture that instead promotes casual sex, instant gratification, and selfish individualism.

Whereas institutions outside the family—such as schools, the mass media, businesses—once largely reinforced the inculcation of traditional values, today they are often indifferent or downright hostile to family values and the rights of parents to pass on such values to their children. Many parents sense that they are being undercut by larger institutional forces. And they recognize that children who lack the self-esteem that comes from parental attention and affection are especially vulnerable to negative peer and cultural influences.

This helps explain why parents are not marching in the streets for government and business policies—such as socialized day-care—that take over child-rearing responsibilities from families. Understandably, parents are not eager to see their already tenuous role in their children's lives diminished further. They correctly perceive that time with children is essential to child-rearing success, and they are unhappy with the amount of time they currently have available for their kids.

Feeling Guilty

A 1990 *Los Angeles Times* poll found that 57 percent of all fathers and 55 percent of all mothers feel guilty about spending too little time with their children. A 1989 *New York Times* survey found that 83 percent of employed mothers and 72 percent of employed fathers say they are torn by conflict between their jobs and the desire to spend more time with their families. A 1988 *USA Today* poll found that parents with young children identify "missing big events in their children's lives" as the thing they most dislike about their current day-care situation.

This same poll found that 73 percent of all two-parent families would have one parent stay home full-time with children "if money were not an issue." A number of other polls, including a 1989 *Washington Post*/ABC News survey, have produced similar results.

Where extended family networks still exist, grandparents and other relatives are parents' leading choice for nonparental child-care. The most recent Census Bureau data on child-care arrangements show that one in five preschool children with employed mothers are primarily cared for by grandmothers or other relatives. Care by grandmothers is a particularly common arrangement for single-parent families. In fact, single mothers often organize their work schedules around the child-care availability of their own mothers (many of whom are otherwise employed), much in the way that many married mothers organize their work schedules around their husband's availability to care for children.

While day-care lobbyists claim that most employed parents who use care by a family member do so because they cannot afford or do not have access to "more preferred" forms of high-quality center-based care, several recent studies suggest otherwise. A University of

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Michigan study found that most employed mothers opting for care by family members did so out of preference rather than necessity. And a 1989 Lou Harris poll found that 82 percent of the American public believes care by parents or other family members is superior to care by non-relatives.

Rummaging through the Past

Many opinion leaders in government, academia, and the mass media view initiatives designed to increase family time—especially those that recognize the strengths of the breadwinner–homemaker family model—as an attempt to "turn back the clock" rather than "facing the realities" of modern family life. They overlook the fact that concerns about family time are shared by a broad spectrum of individuals, all of whom do not agree on the optimal division of household labor.

A 1989 Cornell University study found that two-thirds of all mothers employed full-time would like to work fewer hours so that they could devote more time to their families. And, when respondents to a 1989 survey commissioned by the Mass Mutual Insurance Company were asked to identify "extremely effective" ways to strengthen the family, nearly twice as many opted for "spending more time together" than listed "full-time parent raising kids." Clearly, concerns about family time are not limited to those who regard the breadwinner–homemaker family model as ideal.

Most Americans do not sneer at the past the way elitists do. Whitehead observes:

> In the official debate [on family issues], the remembered past is almost always considered a suspect, even unhealthy, guide for the present or future....But for the parents I met, the remembered past is not a dusty artifact of the good old days; it is an important and vital social resource. Parents take instruction from their own family's past, rummaging through it for usable truths and adopting—or modifying or occasionally rejecting—its values....In the official language, the family isn't getting weaker, it's just "changing." Most parents I met believe otherwise.

Pro-Child Tax Relief

What, then, can government do to foster more family time and nurture stronger parent-child relationships? Rather than expanding the scope of government to replace families, policymakers should seek to help parents fulfill their child-rearing responsibilities by dramatically reducing the tax burden on families with children. Allowing parents to keep more of their own earned income would give families greater control of their money—and their time.

There are a number of ways to provide such relief. Policymakers could raise the tax exemption for dependents to $7,000 or extend the Earned Income Tax Credit up the income scale, or greatly expand the Young Child Tax Credit (a refundable tax credit that was created as part of the 1990 child-care bill). Whatever the instrument, tax cuts should be keyed to the presence, age, and number of children. This means lawmakers interested in pro-child tax relief should steer clear of Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan's proposal to reduce payroll taxes because it fails to take into consideration the presence of children. In fact, under the Moynihan proposal, a childless couple earning $100,000 a year would receive three times the tax savings offered to a median-income family of four.

Greatly expanding the Young Child Tax Credit would be the most appropriate first step toward promoting family time, because it targets relief to families when child-rearing time demands are greatest and when family income typically is lowest. Tripling the Young Child Tax Credit in amount, in income range affected, and in age span affected would provide taxpayers earning up to $63,000 an annual tax credit of up to $1,065 for each child under the age of three. Such a credit would also make it financially easier for family-oriented workers to take time off from work to be with children during the critical first years of life, a fact that should please both supporters and opponents of government-mandated parental-leave legislation.

In fact, the Young Child Tax Credit is designed to eliminate the tax code's bias against parents who take time off from their jobs to devote themselves to the important task of rearing children, by stipulating that families that do not use day-care be entitled to the same tax credits afforded day-care users. Tripling the Young Child Tax Credit would provide both real tax relief and genuine tax equity to all families with young children.

Parents who value safety, education, and time with children must either live in areas with poorer schools and higher crime or divert time from children to paid employment in order to purchase a home in an area with good schools and low crime.

Homework for Parents

Tax relief, while much needed, can only go so far in promoting family time. America must also seek what Zinsmeister calls a "more fluid, less rigid job market" that gives family-oriented workers significant discretion over when, where, and how many hours they work for pay. Accordingly, policymakers should encourage flexible

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Photofest

Americans work fewer hours (if any) during the twilight years of life when they have fewer child-rearing responsibilities.

hours, part-time work, job sharing, and most especially home-based employment opportunities. Not only is homework one of the more promising work-family solutions, but it also has the potential to put a dent in rush-hour traffic congestion, daytime home burglaries, automotive air pollution, and gasoline consumption.

The first step toward making home-based employment a more viable option would be to loosen restrictions on the deductibility of home office expenses. Under current law, taxpayers cannot write off home office expenses unless home office space is used exclusively for income-producing activities. In other words, overhead expenses for a room that doubles as an office and a guest bedroom cannot be claimed. This exclusive-use rule is particularly burdensome to families with children because they have greater demands on household space than do, say, bachelors living alone. Thus, Congress should consider dropping the exclusive-use test for parents.

The Twilight Zone

In addition, government policies should encourage a re-ordering of priorities over the life cycle. Americans tend to work greater hours when they are most apt to have child-rearing responsibilities and fewer hours (if any) during the twilight years of life when they are least apt to have child-rearing responsibilities.

Author Arlene Rossen Cardozo and lawyer Edith U. Fierst believe the solution to this curious arrangement is "sequencing"—seeking to "do it all" over the course of one's life, instead of all at once. Cardozo and Fierst point to Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor and former United Nations Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick as examples of "sequencers" who took time off from employment when children were young and then returned to their careers after their kids were "well-launched."

Sequencing could be encouraged by calling upon employers to give preference in hiring to parents returning to the labor force after an extended stint at home with children. In essence, parents who leave their jobs after the birth or adoption of a child would be treated much like veterans who leave their jobs to serve in the military: they would be given preference in hiring for any available position for which they are qualified.

Apart from facilitating full-time parental care of young children for extended periods of time, Congress should remove disincentives to old-age employment, or "twilighting." Specifically, Congress should eliminate the Social Security earnings test and allow "twilighters" to receive full benefits rather than have their benefits reduced in proportion to their income. At the same time, Congress should seek to reverse the growing trend toward early retirement by accelerating scheduled increases in the Social Security retirement age. Indeed, given the improving health and life expectancy of Americans, Congress should consider raising the retirement age beyond currently scheduled thresholds.

School Choice

Educational choice is another policy that could give children more time with their parents. Family time has been seriously eroded by parents' attempts to pay for homes in good school districts. Fortunately, this added economic pressure could be alleviated somewhat through the use of school vouchers.

A free-choice educational system would give parents the opportunity to choose, without penalty, the school best suited to meeting the unique needs of their children, even if that school is a private, sectarian, or home school. Such a system would encourage greater parental participation in the educational process, and stimulate some creative experimentation that just might redefine the concept of parental participation entirely.

For example, it is quite possible that in a free-choice educational system, part-day or part-week programs would emerge, giving parents an opportunity to teach some subjects at home while other subjects are covered in the classroom. Such schools might have particular appeal to parents who would prefer to teach controversial subjects (such as sex education) or would like some half-and-half arrangement that combines the best of what home schooling has to offer with the best of traditional schooling. Such a development, which would increase parental participation in the educational process, is far more appealing than proposals to lengthen the school day or school year, which detract from family time and parental involvement.

Favoring Two-Parent Families

Finally, lawmakers should construct family policy that favors two-parent families. While it is appropriate to laud the efforts of those conscientious single parents striving to give all they can to their children, policymakers and other leaders have a moral obligation to speak the obvious truth that two-parent families are superior and to adopt policies that promote them.

The will to take such action has often been lacking, yet the urgency for doing so has never been greater. As

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Vanderbilt University's Chester Finn puts it:

> Today we seem to attach more opprobrium to dropping out of school, experimenting on a cat, or uttering nasty remarks on campus than we do to giving birth to what, not so many years ago, were called "illegitimate" children....[C]hild-rearing arrangements not based on a decently functioning family are inferior to arrangements that are based on such a family. It's like a heart transplant. You may live for a while, and you may be better off than when your own heart was failing, but you are always worse off than people with healthy hearts that came into the world with them. To acknowledge this is not enough. We need to teach it, to preach it, to persuade people of it. It's a whole lot more important to the society's future than stopping smoking or lowering cholesterol levels or recycling aluminum cans.

There are several steps policymakers could take to discourage divorce and illegitimacy. In response to the problems of no-fault divorce, Michael Schwartz of the Free Congress Foundation has urged states to adopt a "two-track" marriage system in which prospective married couples could opt for either an easily dissoluble no-fault union or a marriage that could be dissolved only after findings of fault. Given the freedom to choose, Schwartz believes most couples would opt for a fault-based arrangement. But even if only a handful of marriages opted for this more-difficult-to-break bond, that would be an improvement over the current system, in which one million children see their parents divorce every year.

To encourage family formation, Robert Rector of The Heritage Foundation has proposed including a spousal benefit in the Earned Income Tax Credit, as a means of making marriage more economically attractive to low-income working families. And Charles Donovan of the Family Research Council has suggested giving welfare recipients who marry out of dependency a one-time "marriage bonus" that could be applied to wedding expenses, a honeymoon, purchase of a new house, or some other expenditure. This "transitional benefit" would send an important statement to welfare recipients about how society views marriage.

In 1950, the average family of four paid 2 percent of its earnings to federal taxes. Today it pays 24 percent.

Photofest

Kids would benefit from changes in their parents' workplace such as more flexible hours, part-time work, job sharing, and home-based employment.

Apart from these efforts, attention needs to be given to promoting abstinence as the best means of reducing illegitimacy, and to promoting either marriage or two-parent adoption as the best response to an out-of-wedlock pregnancy.

"Doing Things Together"

It would be a mistake to suggest that government action alone can solve America's family-time famine. Clearly, major changes also are needed in a number of other areas—in the employment practices businesses adopt, in the cultural messages sent by Hollywood and Madison Avenue, in the attitudes and priorities of career-obsessed parents.

Still, the time for government action is now. Americans believe "parents having less time to spend with their families" is the most important reason for the family's decline in our society, according to a recent survey. And most parents would like to see the work–family pendulum swing back in the direction of home.

To be sure, most children would not object to spending more unhurried time with their parents. Indeed, when 1,500 schoolchildren were asked, "What do you think makes a happy family?" social scientists Nick Stinnett and John DeFrain report that children "did not list money, cars, fine homes, or televisions." Instead the answer most frequently offered was "doing things together."

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Miracle Whip

Can Newt Gingrich Save the Bush Presidency?

An Interview by Adam Meyerson

Never one to shy away from a fight, House Minority Whip Newt Gingrich (R–GA) became a true conservative hero this past October when he followed the lead of Republican backbenchers and came out against President Bush's budget agreement. The shabby treatment he then received from the White House further strained relations between the administration and conservatives, already badly damaged by the president's betrayal of his tax promise.

In an interview with *Policy Review* editor Adam Meyerson in November 1990, Gingrich discussed the most serious mistakes in the budget negotiations, how House Republicans and the White House can work together if the White House is interested, how the GOP can do better in congressional elections, and why he came so close to losing his own race in Georgia.

Policy Review: **The elections in 1990 were the third disaster in a row for House Republicans. Why were Republicans so successful in picking up House seats in 1978, 1980, and 1984? And why did they lose seats in 1986, 1988, and 1990? Have Republicans abandoned issues and coalition strategies that used to work for them? Are there some issues that worked once for the GOP but don't work any more?**

Gingrich: I don't agree that 1990 was a disaster—the party in the White House usually loses seats in off-year elections, especially third-term off-year elections. What we lost was the opportunity to make history—by beating the odds and picking up seats in the House and Senate as well as a few governorships.

Obviously anti-Communism isn't the issue it used to be. But one of the lessons of 1990 is that the tax issue still works. Anti-tax Democrats beat incumbent Republican governors in Nebraska and Kansas. Republicans John Engler in Michigan and George Voinovich in Ohio won on an anti-tax platform. Even Mario Cuomo got the message, and has just introduced a no-new-taxes budget. The values of the Reagan movement still win at the polls, as we saw with the defeats of Big Green in California and of Jim Hightower in Texas. Republicans who have strayed from Reaganism tended to get hurt.

Another important lesson of 1990 is that if you don't run, you can't win. In Virginia, not one of the five Democratic incumbents in the House was challenged. All five Republicans were. Is it any surprise, looking at the arithmetic, that the Democrats picked up a seat? No one predicted a Republican would beat Douglas Bosco in California, Doug Walgren in Pennsylvania, or Robert Kastenmeier in Wisconsin, but we pulled off victories because we had someone running. The GOP needs 210 serious challengers if it's going anywhere in '92.

P.R.: **Presumably, one of the differences between 1978-80-84 and 1986-88-90 is that conservative grass-roots groups are much less involved in congressional elections than they used to be.**

Gingrich: I do think conservative grass-roots efforts have lost momentum in the past four to six years. I don't see the same drive and energy among the activists that I saw in the early '80s. Maybe they have lost faith in Congress as a place to get things done. Perhaps the national mood has shifted, with new issues such as environmentalism becoming a little more important. But in the past year we've seen the conservative grass roots aroused over the child-care and quota bills. I expect we'll see a revival of conservative activism if the Democrats move left and adopt a more union-driven agenda.

P.R.: **Have the Reagan Democrats been going back to the Democratic Party in congressional elections, and if so, why? How do Republicans get them back?**

Gingrich: The Reagan Democrats voted Republican because of the no-new-taxes pledge, strong Republican positions on foreign policy and Communism, and the sense among many Democrats that the national Democratic leadership was unacceptable to their values. In addition to his tax reversal, President Bush made a terrible mistake by constantly inviting House Speaker Tom Foley, Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell, and other congressional Democrats down to the White House for negotiations and photo opportunities. This

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Drawing by Alexander Hunter for *Policy Review*

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legitimized the Democratic leadership in the eyes of the American people.

Still, Republican victories in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Alabama showed that in parts of the country the Reagan coalition is alive and well. Phil Gramm, who is becoming a major conservative spokesman, won more than 60 percent of the vote—the highest margin ever for a Republican Senate candidate in Texas—with the support of a lot of Democrats. In California, Pete Wilson used the quota issue very effectively in his gubernatorial campaign to break up Dianne Feinstein's coalition and win Democratic votes, especially from Asians.

A free society functions well only if there is honesty. That's why breaking the no-new-taxes promise was so destructive.

The way to win the support of Reagan Democrats hasn't changed: We have to show that the Democratic Party is irresponsible on crime, values, fiscal issues, and foreign policy.

***P.R.:* What effect did the budget controversy and President Bush's reversal of his no-new-taxes pledge have on congressional races?**

Gingrich: They were harmful at the margins. Our great loss was the opportunity to gain seats rather than lose them. The election results in places like New York and New Jersey showed how vulnerable the Cuomo–Florio Democrats were. But our side got confused by the reversal of the tax pledge. A lot of Republican voters stayed home. The breaking of a campaign commitment lowered the Republican Party's believability. And the president's fund-raising ability was substantially weakened in October, which may have had an effect on some close races.

***P.R.:* In your own race, were you helped or hurt by your opposition to the summit agreement?**

Gingrich: I was hurt either way. I ended up losing votes from Republicans angry with me for going against the president. I also would have lost votes of conservative Democrats, independents, and Republicans if I didn't go against him.

***P.R.:* What other reasons do you give for your own brush with defeat? Are there issues, such as the Eastern Air Lines strike, where you would respond differently if you could do it over again?**

Gingrich: There are four main reasons I came so close to losing. First, my district sent me a message: come on home. People said they wanted me to be a representative first, and a whip second. They wanted to see me a little less on the "Today Show" and a little more in Clayton County. Bob Michel warned me of this. He said he had his closest race right after he was elected minority leader.

Second, my opposition to federal intervention in the Eastern strike clearly hurt. A lot of my constituents work at the Atlanta airport, which is a big hub for Eastern. The machinists union remained deeply bitter about my stand, and actively worked against me.

Third, the Republican ticket was weaker than I thought in Georgia. We had a terrific year in '88, but in '90 there was an anti-tax vote against Republican officials in two of my counties.

Fourth, my support for the congressional pay raise also hurt. My opponent sent out five pieces of direct mail on the pay raise.

What have I learned? I'm going to spend much more time in my district, get on the airplane more often to come home. I would not change my vote on the Eastern strike. I think I did the right thing for the country. And I would rather pay the price of running harder in the district than voting for something I don't believe in.

***P.R.:* What were the president's major mistakes in the budget agreement?**

Gingrich: In retrospect, Bush shouldn't have gone to the summit at all. He's head of one of two teams in the Super Bowl, not commissioner of the National Football League. Any time he negotiates with the Democratic leadership, he weakens his own team. For the same reason, it was a mistake that I initially joined him.

Giving up the tax pledge was a terrible error, because it struck at the core of people's respect for politicians. Bush had built up a rapport with the American people, who thought he was someone who would do what he promised. They trusted him. Losing that trust was a more serious consequence of Bush's raising taxes than any damage done to the economy. Americans are now going to find it harder to trust any politician.

Another error has to be the White House's failure to develop a consistent communications strategy. The president started with a strong bargaining position on almost every issue he cared about, but the strength of his hand was seriously eroded because he failed to cultivate the support of the American people.

Capital gains is one of the best examples. This was, and is, a winnable issue. The American people want more investment, they want better jobs, they want economic growth; lowering capital gains taxes is a way to achieve all these things. In October '89, the House carried a capital gains tax cut, without a tax increase, by 264 votes. By October '90 we ended up with a tax increase without a capital gains cut. Without a coherent communications strategy, the administration was put on the psychological defensive. The president let the Democrats define the capital gains issue as one of rich against poor. It's not. It's an issue of growth.

One last mistake was Budget Director Richard

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Darman's decision to make a deal with Senator Robert Byrd. The result was a fiasco—a more than 10 percent increase in discretionary spending in the name of fixing the deficit! This was clearly a victory of Washington insiders over the American people.

P.R.: **What lessons do you hope the White House will learn from the budget fiasco?**

Gingrich: That in '91 and '92 the Democrats should be dealt with at arm's length, and with a veto strategy. And that cutting spending, not raising taxes, is the best opportunity to build a majority.

I also hope the White House will work on its communications strategy right away. In the Persian Gulf crisis we're seeing the same problem we saw with the budget. The president started with a very strong domestic hand in his response to Saddam Hussein. But without a consistent communications strategy, his position has been eroding week by week. The president will have to resolve this weakness if he hopes to do well in 1992.

P.R.: **What have you learned from your own role in the budget agreement? Did we get a worse budget deal because you helped torpedo the first one, and if so, was it worth it?**

Gingrich: I should have been negative about the budget summit much earlier. I should have reacted to initial discussions of tax increases much more publicly and strongly than I did. Allowing comity in negotiations to prevail over the articulation of values was a mistake.

I didn't torpedo the budget deal. The American people did. The president asked for their support; he got their rejection. In my office, 83 percent of 775 phone calls were against the deal. The president then had the option of letting the deal collapse and going to veto strategy. It's not my fault that when the country rejected the deal, the White House decided to cut a worse deal with the Democrats. That's Darman's problem, not mine.

P.R.: **What are the most effective ways President Bush and House Republicans can work together? Are there enough conservative Democrats for Bush to build a conservative base comparable to Reagan's boll-weevil coalition in 1981 and 1982?**

Gingrich: House Republicans and the president have far more in common than the president has with the Democratic leadership. We ought to sit down and lay out a reform agenda not just for Republicans but for all Americans.

The president has to pursue a veto strategy, and we can give him the votes to make it succeed. There aren't enough conservative Democrats to win 218-vote victories. But there are more than enough conservative Republicans and Democrats for the president to win the 146 votes he needs to sustain vetoes. The goal should be two years of vetoing bad legislation, bringing spending under control, and defining where we would take the country, plus finding 210 Republican candidates to run in '92.

P.R.: **Can conservative House Republicans work with Chief of Staff John Sununu after what he has been saying about them?**

Gingrich: We can work with Sununu. I'm encouraged by the choice of Bill Bennett as Republican National Committee chairman. The sniping we have seen from the White House doesn't help President Bush or the Republican Party. Some of it has been childish. But we want to help the president succeed. If the White House says it wants to cooperate, and the offer is sincere, we'd like to work with them. The next couple of months will tell us how sincere they are.

P.R.: **What role should the House minority whip play when House Republicans and the president disagree about a major issue?**

Gingrich: I represent the 6th District of Georgia, and as whip I represent the House Republican Party. I don't represent the president. My duty was to stand with the 60 percent of House Republicans who voted against the budget agreement. I'm prepared to be President Bush's ally, not his deputy floor manager.

I didn't torpedo the budget deal. The American people did.

P.R.: **What advice would you give the White House in terms of its operations?**

Gingrich: The White House needs three things it doesn't have now: a visionary agenda, a consistent communications strategy to articulate and reinforce that agenda among the American people, and a grass-roots outreach operation that will overwhelm the Washington establishment if it resists the president's reforms.

The White House also has to stop thinking that politics and governing can be separated. The American people don't wear one hat as citizens and another hat as voters. You cannot manipulate the American people by cynically running political campaigns differently than the way you run the country. Americans are looking for genuine ideals and values in politics. They want politics to reinforce governing.

P.R.: **What explains the relatively high—22 percent—black vote for Republican congressional candidates in 1990? What should the GOP do to increase that percentage?**

Gingrich: The black community is increasingly interested in becoming part of mainstream America. More and more blacks are joining the middle class, going to school,

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building businesses and professional careers. I think it's entirely natural that more and more, especially younger blacks, are voting Republican.

Gary Franks' victory in Connecticut this past year was very important. We now have a conservative Republican in the Congressional Black Caucus. Other rising conservative spokesmen—Keith Butler in Detroit, Ken Blackwell in Cincinnati, Louis Sullivan at Health and Human Services, to name just a few—are providing a new kind of black leadership. I hope and expect that black support for Republicans will go up.

President Bush has to pursue a veto strategy. House Republicans can give him the votes to make it succeed.

***P.R.:* Why do you think David Duke won so many votes in Louisiana? Is public sentiment against racial quotas growing, and if so, is there a way to address the concerns of quota opponents in a way that isn't racially polarizing?**

Gingrich: One of the unsung positives of 1990 is the pro-civil rights, anti-quota argument that the president has been articulating. Being against quotas and for integration is overwhelmingly the majority opinion in America. It is also a position a very significant part of the black community feels comfortable with.

Quotas are the way to get David Duke more votes. Conservative Republicans are opposed to quotas precisely because we're against people like David Duke. We are explicitly for integration and civil rights for everyone—but civil rights based on individual characteristics, not genetic code. I would urge President Bush to sign the LaFalce bill, which would protect civil rights, and at the same time be very firm against quotas.

***P.R.:* What are the cutting-edge issues for conservatives in the next two years?**

Gingrich: America is much more prepared for systematic reform than its politicians are. Big-city schools don't teach. Health care is too expensive and chaotic. Crime is rampant. Most government is much too bureaucratic. Probably no more than 25 percent of the American people would say the current system works and that we just have to raise taxes for it to work better. The other 75 percent will embrace an agenda of systematic reform.

Reform conservatism means taking government seriously. If there's going to be a Department of Labor, conservatives have to know how to run it. We have to know enough of the details to know how to give each program and agency a thorough overhaul.

I see seven key words for the conservative reform agenda. Safety—both personal and national. Working—a strong economy, a welfare system that encourages work, homework. Saving—IRAs for everybody, savings plans for health costs. Investing—a good start would be capital gains tax cuts. Learning—whether through Polly Williams's vouchers or the earning by learning plan in Georgia or decentralized, computerized learning by adults. Health—environmental protection, incentives for personal health. Honesty. The last theme is where breaking the no-tax-increase promise was so destructive. A free society functions well only if there is honesty. Cynicism and corruption destroy a free society. ☎

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Why Johnny's Dad Can't Read

The Elusive Goal of Universal Adult Literacy

Meredith Bishop

John Corcoran taught high school social studies in California for 18 years and later became a multimillionaire real estate developer. Yet he could not read or write until three years ago.

"As a blind man figures his way around the room, as a deaf man reads lips," Corcoran made up for his inability to read by developing other skills. "I've learned many things visually. I learned language and oral vocabulary by listening to people, and I developed an oral literacy."

Corcoran's parents moved often and he attended 17 different elementary and high schools in Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California. When he refused to read in class, his teachers thought he was a discipline problem, not an educational one. But he was always passed on to the next grade. He went to college on a basketball scholarship and graduated with a degree in education and business administration. Although he could not read, he understood numbers and took classes in accounting and math.

As a teacher, Corcoran hid his illiteracy by holding group discussions, bringing in outside speakers, and having students read the textbook to the class. He used standardized tests that had an answer key with the holes punched through the right answers. When administrators asked him to read something and give his opinion on the spot, Corcoran claimed to be late for a meeting or to have forgotten his glasses. The experience made him feel like a cheat and a liar.

He left teaching and struck it rich in real estate. But it was not until he was 48 years old that he took himself to a local library literacy program and asked to be taught how to read. He was matched with a 65-year-old volunteer "with less than 20 hours of training who believed she could teach me how," Corcoran says. She was raised in the old school and taught him phonics, the rules governing the relationship between sounds and letters. He soon found out that he had a learning disability that had thwarted his progress before, but using phonics helped him to sound out the words.

Before his tutoring, Corcoran could not write a note to his wife saying he had gone to the store. Now he reads magazines and can write with the help of a dictionary. His spelling skills lag behind at the fifth-grade level, he says, but he has "improved tremendously." His remarkable story has received national attention through his efforts to raise public awareness of illiteracy. But Corcoran makes no illusions about his progress: "I think it's going to take me 10 years to learn how to read, including reading, writing, spelling—all aspects of literacy."

John Corcoran's story is as unusual as it is typical. Unlike most adult illiterates, Corcoran became extremely successful in spite of his disability. Yet he is like countless others who were passed through school, and even college, unable to read. As with so many other adult illiterates, Corcoran's reading and writing problems would have been taken care of earlier if schools and teachers had done a better job measuring his performance and insisting on improvement. But for adult illiterates who missed their chance in school, literacy programs can offer hope for those who want to learn.

Waste of Human Potential

There are good reasons to be concerned about adult illiteracy. Illiterates live precariously, dependent on others for information and guidance through a highly literate world. The illiterate has to memorize all information that the reader can simply write down. Even driving a car can prove arduous for someone who cannot read street signs. Illiteracy closes off opportunities and wastes human potential. Indeed, in a world where productivity is ever more dependent on a skilled and knowledgeable labor force, illiteracy is one of America's most important sources of competitive disadvantage, and a major obstacle to upward mobility. Over half of those in prison in this country and most welfare recipients are less than marginally literate.

Sensing the growing concern over high illiteracy rates, President Bush and the nation's governors declared at the Education Summit that by "the year 2000, every adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship." But such platitudes ring hollow considering the major flaws with adult literacy training today.

Meredith Bishop *is assistant editor of* Policy Review.

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John Corcoran taught high school social studies for 18 years without knowing how to read.

There are three principal obstacles to the achievement of universal literacy. First, only a small portion of the illiterate population ever signs up for literacy programs; of those who do, between 50 and 75 percent drop out within the first few weeks. Second, literacy programs are dominated by misguided teaching methods that do more to frustrate students than to teach them. Third, an astonishing lack of accountability pervades the adult literacy field. Government agencies appropriate hundreds of millions of dollars for adult literacy, but, for the most part, have no idea how much they actually spend, much less where their literacy dollars are going. This lack of accountability spills over to local literacy programs, which are often reluctant to define important terms such as what literacy means, or what works in teaching people to read.

Attaining higher rates of literacy is not impossible, but a more clearly directed effort that defines important goals and how to achieve them would be more successful at helping those who want to learn.

Five Levels of Literacy

In the early days of the United States, literacy meant that you could sign your name. Fifty years ago, literacy meant having at least a sixth-grade education. Today, with a rapidly advancing technological society, a much higher standard of literacy is required. Some argue that a 12th-grade reading level is necessary to get by.

Education experts don't have a standard definition, however. In most adult education circles, literacy is "whatever is necessary for one to function in his or her particular society." In 1970, the U.S. Department of Education defined adult literacy as "the ability to read, write, and compute with the functional competence needed for meeting the requirements of adult living." Typical in its ambiguity, this definition does not inform one as to what the requirements for adult living are. Chester Finn, director of the Educational Excellence Network, says that literacy programs have a vested interest in keeping standards of literacy vague. "There are tactical advantages to having the problem undefined," he says. Without strict definitions, who is to say whether literacy programs are successful? Federal and state funding are assured when there are no criteria by which to judge results.

Literacy can best be thought of as a continuum, with five degrees of skill: illiteracy, functional illiteracy, marginal literacy, basic literacy, and advanced literacy.

Illiteracy is the complete inability to read, write, or compute. Very few Americans are totally illiterate in this sense. Functional illiterates can make out some words and perhaps sign their names but they cannot perform important tasks such as filling out a job application, reading the warning label on a medicine bottle, interpreting a bus schedule, or counting change at the grocery store. According to various studies, between 13 and 20 percent of the adult population fall in this category. Marginal literacy is the ability to perform limited reading and writing tasks, but without great skill or understanding. Although most discussions of adult illiteracy focus on the lowest levels of reading, a greater number—34 percent of the population, according to one estimate—is believed to have only marginal reading, writing, and math skills.

Someone with a basic level of literacy could get a General Equivalency Diploma (GED) or a high school diploma, read a simple newspaper such as *USA Today*, maintain a household budget, follow voting procedures, and write a letter. Advanced literacy would include the ability to easily read the *New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal*.

A good adult literacy program should raise students' reading and writing by at least two to three grade levels after roughly 100 hours of instruction. This would essentially bring them to the next higher category of literacy: a functional illiterate would become marginally literate, a marginally literate person would attain basic literacy. Ideally, literacy programs should bring all students to at least the level of basic literacy; but for most adult learners this will take a long time, sometimes years.

Success in raising grade levels of reading is not a criterion for Department of Education grants.

No-Show Students

There is no easy answer as to why such an advanced industrial country as the U.S. has so many illiterates. Learning disabilities, illiterate parents, or an abusive home life could hamper a child's education. As Corcoran's example shows, one of the more important reasons adult illiteracy is so widespread is that schools are not insisting that children learn how to read and write. In California, as in many states, children are often passed on to the next grade because of age, regardless of whether they have grasped the basic skills. In many

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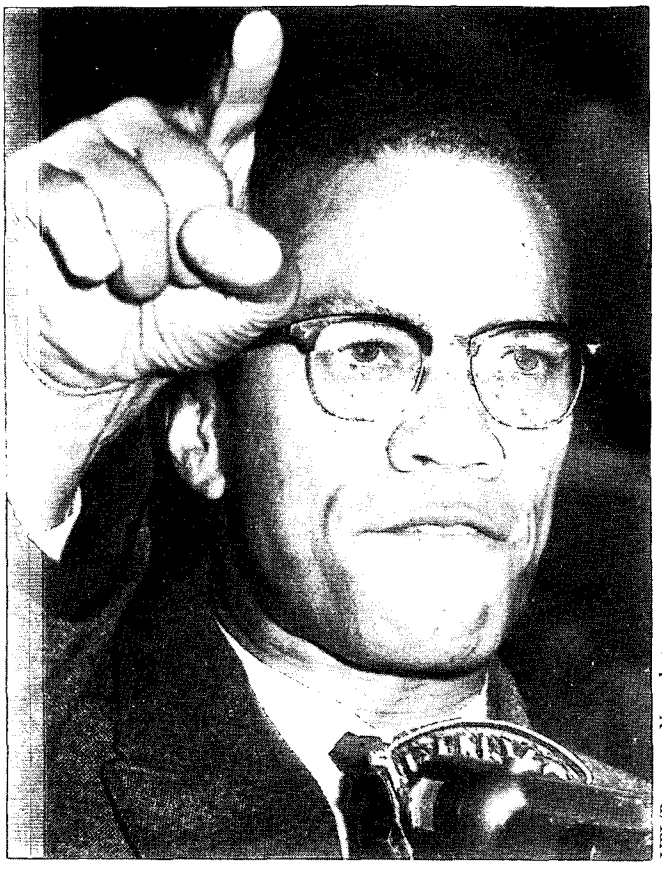

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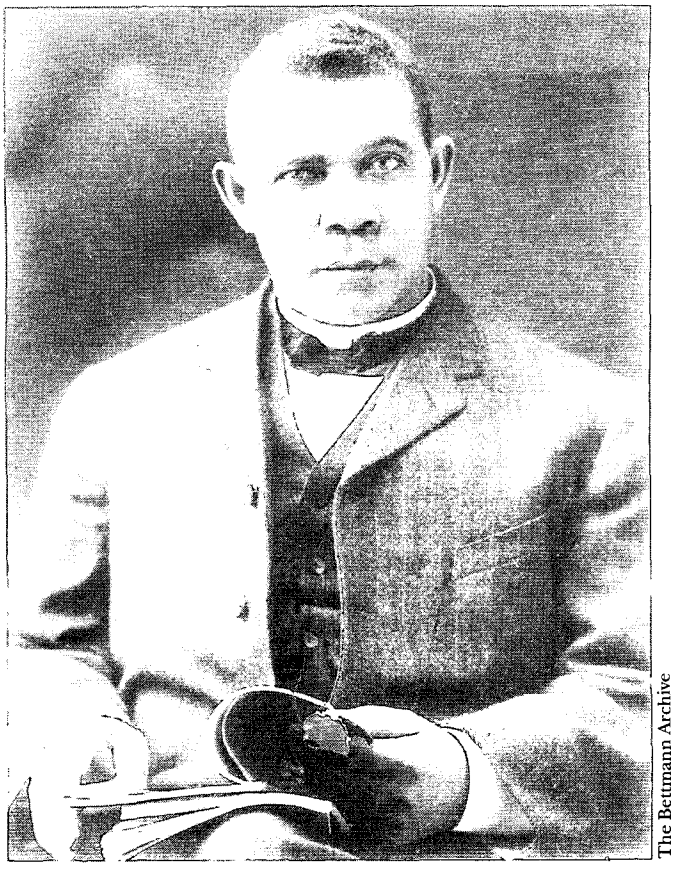

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You don't need a literacy program to learn. Malcolm X (left) taught himself how to read in prison. He copied the dictionary word for word, from cover to cover. Booker T. Washington taught himself to read with a phonics primer.

states teachers are rewarded for the number of students they pass to the next grade. The incentive is to process children, not to teach them.

The Department of Education estimates that every year three million Americans enroll in literacy programs, a small proportion of the target population. And of those who do enroll, as many as 50 to 75 percent drop out.

A lack of interest may be responsible for low enrollment rates. Many illiterate adults have no desire or need to read. Perhaps they have gotten along adequately for years without reading. Although more and more jobs require high reading levels, there remain many service-oriented jobs that require little reading or writing ability. Because learning to read as an adult can be difficult, one must be dedicated to that goal. No literacy program or teacher can force someone to learn to read if he does not want to learn.

Joy Rogers, a professor of counseling and educational psychology at Loyola University in Chicago, has been a literacy tutor for 10 years and agrees that motivation is key. "One of the major problems is that students don't show up," she says. Students aren't motivated because they see little value in raising their skill levels by such trifling amounts. Real job and salary improvements come only with advanced degrees.

In addition to lack of interest, shame contributes to poor turnout and retention rates. Many illiterates do not tell even their loved ones of their illiteracy. Like Corcoran, they often devise ingenious ways to hide the truth.

Rhea Lawson, director of the Lifelong Learning Center (a library devoted to literacy in Baltimore), tells the story of a successful businessman who was illiterate. When he secretly joined the library's literacy program, his wife thought he was having an affair. One day she followed him and saw her husband meeting a woman in the library. She confronted her husband about his infidelity and instead he confessed his illiteracy. The wife was somewhat relieved, but soon replaced the other woman as her husband's tutor.

Fear, low self-esteem, lack of transportation or child-care, and lack of family support also contribute to high dropout rates. Yet these "barriers" to literacy disappear if the student truly desires to learn.

Malcolm X taught himself how to read in prison. Embarrassed that he could barely write a coherent sentence in his letters to his Black Muslim spiritual leader, Elijah Muhammad, Malcolm X systematically copied the dictionary word for word, from cover to cover. He left prison with a larger vocabulary and better reading and writing skills.

Booker T. Washington, the former slave who became an educator and founder of the Tuskegee Institute, also taught himself how to read. He found a copy of Webster's "Blue-Back Speller," a phonics primer, and coached himself in reading and writing until he convinced a teacher to give him added instruction in the evening.

Even the severely retarded and those with learning disabilities can learn to read—although it may take them

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several years to do so. Patrick Groff, professor of teacher education at San Diego State University, says that 4 percent of the population has a neurological handicap, such as severe dyslexia, that makes them unable to read. Albert Einstein and Nelson Rockefeller both overcame learning disabilities that made reading difficult.

While most people with low intelligence levels will not learn how to read, Groff says that many can learn provided they are taught with a "good methodology," such as phonics. Jeanne Chall, professor of education and director of the Reading Laboratory at Harvard University, believes that almost everyone can learn but that those with severe disabilities need more instruction than others.

Confusing Teaching Methods

Unfortunately, confusing teaching methods used by many literacy programs contribute to high dropout rates. Despite 70 years of evidence against it, many literacy programs still use the "whole-word" or "look-say" methodology, whereby students memorize whole words, without extensive reference to the letters and sounds. All research points to the superiority of phonics, which teaches students to break down words into identifiable letters and sounds. Whole-word students find themselves at a distinct disadvantage. While phonics students can apply their knowledge of the alphabet and sounds to any word, whole-word students must memorize every word as an independent entity. The whole-word method treats words like hieroglyphics, says Miriam Hinds, president of the Reading Reform Foundation.

Few illiterate adults ever sign up for literacy programs. Of those who do, 50 to 75 percent drop out within the first few weeks.

Whole-word teaching programs developed by Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA) work with a list of 300 "survival words," which students memorize throughout the course of their instruction. Laubach Literacy Action, on the other hand, is one of the last bastions of phonics teaching in the United States.

Whole-word is the reigning practice in education today, both in elementary schools and in adult literacy programs, even though all comparisons favor phonics. Jeanne Chall explains that whole-word remains popular because it is easier to teach and less demanding of students and teachers: "Systematic and direct phonics is associated with drill, hard work, and a structured learning environment." Whole-word teachers do not have to learn or explain the rules of language and the sounds of letter combinations, but can let the student figure it out. In addition, most textbook companies promote the whole-word method because they make money selling workbooks; phonics requires no such materials.

Although there are fundamental differences between the two approaches, both phonics and whole-word methodologies emphasize the importance of writing and reading comprehension. Phonics proponents argue that both children and adult students must learn the building blocks of language first, and comprehension will follow naturally with practice in reading. Whole-word tries to teach comprehension before reading, says Groff, and ends up confusing a student more than helping him.

In addition to bad teaching methods, inadequate teaching materials can also drive away prospective learners. Joy Rogers says that high dropout rates in literacy programs are caused in part by instructional materials that frustrate students and tutors. In a study of the readability level of Literacy Volunteers of America's series, "Read On," Rogers found that the course inadequately treats introductory material about the alphabet and sounds to start at the second-grade level. Students at the lowest reading levels miss this vital information and may be intimidated by reading material that is too advanced. Rogers says that much of the LVA series is written at the second-grade level until it jumps suddenly to much higher reading levels. Although both students and tutors may experience frustration, she says that neither "is likely to suspect the textbook series as a cause of failures." In studying other major literacy publications, Rogers has found similar results. "The materials are awful," she says.

Literacy programs that use such materials increase their dropout rates and do little to help students who remain. Chall says that students "give up after a while when they get the feeling that they're not learning."

Expensive Gadgets

Many literacy programs waste limited funding by buying expensive workbooks and computer systems that are not necessary to teach people to read and write. The IBM PALS system, for example, costs thousands of dollars, but only a few students can use it at a time. "You don't need specialized instructional materials to teach people how to read," says Rogers. Reading can be taught with almost any written material. An old newspaper or a dictionary and a pencil and paper will suffice.

But high-tech gadgets are alluring. Corporations often donate expensive computer systems to literacy programs. Forrest Chisman, of the Southport Institute for Policy Analysis, says that computers are attractive to adult learners. He explains that "the computer is a motivator." A student can feel like he is going "to computer class, not literacy class. It's fun."

In a world where few adult illiterates experience concrete success in learning, buying computer systems and spending a lot of money may give some a sense of accomplishment. But by spending fewer dollars on gadgets, literacy organizations could teach more of those who wish to learn. If large amounts of money were to be invested in literacy programs, they would be best used to pay salaries for dedicated, full-time teachers.

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Prison Progress

While many are mired in the debate over methodology, progress is being made in some classrooms across the nation. One of the best literacy programs in the country is the Nellie Thomas Institute of Learning in California. Using an old-fashioned approach, the Nellie Thomas method teaches phonics, penmanship, and composition. The program has focused its work in California's prisons, where, as in most U.S. prisons, literacy is the exception rather than the rule.

Dennis Norris, an inmate at the Gabilan Conservation Camp in Soledad, California, was told by one literacy program that because of his learning disability he would never read beyond the third-grade level. After going through an eight-week program run by the Nellie Thomas Institute at the prison, however, he now reads the Bible and two to three novels a week. "Phonics is what helped me," Norris says. He was not taught phonics in school, where he remained until the ninth grade, but rather the whole-word approach, which relies heavily on memory. "My memory is not that good," says the 40-year-old Norris.

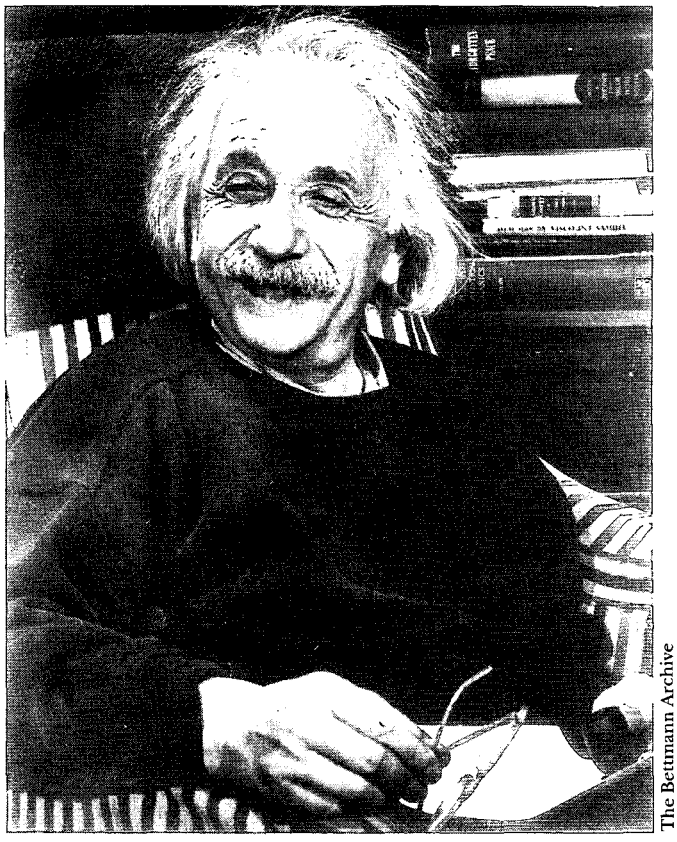
Norris's rapid progress is exceptional. On average, inmates raised their reading levels between 1.5 and 3.5 grade levels in 100 hours of class work. A more typical student is Tony Atkinson, 42, who is slowly but surely learning to read and write. In prison for the 10th time, Atkinson couldn't even write his name correctly. Nancy Giuliotti, executive director of the Nellie Thomas Institute, says that Atkinson "had one of the lowest skill levels of any of the adults I've dealt with." Now he can read and write at a minimal level, and fill out his own job application.

The Nellie Thomas method is unusual in that it teaches in groups of 15 to 20 students, all with differing skill levels. Most literacy training in the United States is one-on-one. Virginia Carey, founder of the Nellie Thomas Institute and now spokesman for the group, explains that because of the large scope of illiteracy today, "you can't change literacy on a one-on-one basis."

The program's success stems from students' immediate improvement. The method begins by teaching penmanship in just 40 minutes, so that students can see progress right away. The method emphasizes penmanship as an art form, giving practical rules for cursive handwriting such as "all small letters are the same size" and "draw each letter as an artist." Students who have never before succeeded in learning are encouraged by their quick success. "Students can see a difference in their penmanship and realize they're not dumb," says Carey. Their self-esteem and pride skyrocket, she says, and the students are ready to learn more.

In addition to penmanship, the Nellie Thomas method encourages student writing. One of the first exercises in the program is to have students write a paper about their fears and a short autobiography. This helps students break down their defenses and helps teachers determine students' skill levels. Students "learn to read from their writing," explains Nancy Mitchell, a Nellie Thomas teacher.

The beauty of the program is its simplicity. As Carey points out, the Nellie Thomas program is "a teacher with a piece of chalk, a method, and talent," and can forgo expensive teaching materials. The main cost is teacher salaries.



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Albert Einstein overcame a disability that made reading difficult. About 4 percent of the population is physically unable to read.

Addicted to Reading

Another successful program from California combines literacy training with drug and alcohol rehabilitation for the homeless. The Acton and Warm Springs Rehabilitation Centers, which have provided services for addicts for 20 years, discovered that many of their patients could not read at all, or only at a minimal level. When residents were discharged from the program they had few employment skills and many slipped back into addiction.

The Language Improvement Program (LIP) at the rehabilitation centers trains literate residents in recovery to serve as tutors for the illiterate residents. Literacy training becomes a part of the alcohol and drug treatment and gives illiterate drug abusers skills to aid their recovery. The tutoring also encourages both student and tutor to remain in the rehabilitation program. Thomas Mayo, a recovering addict and first-time tutor says, "It's rewarding to get out of my self and help someone else. It helps reinforce my own recovery."

LIP uses a combination of teaching techniques, including Literacy Volunteers of America. LVA employs an eclectic one-on-one approach using different methods, including whole-word and student writing. "LVA requires two individuals to get to know one another before they touch reading. The tutor doesn't teach as much as

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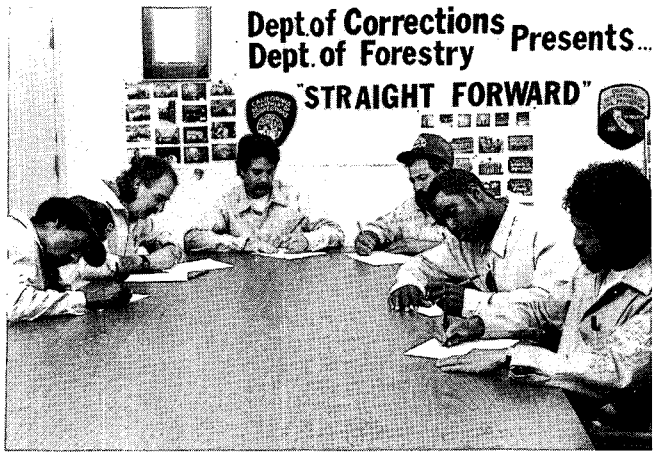

The Nellie Thomas Institute has achieved good results using phonics in California prisons. The more common whole-word method is less demanding of teachers and students, and usually less successful.

guide," explains Richard Rioux, director of resource development for the program.

The program has been extremely successful, with average reading evaluations rising between three and four grade levels in 90 days. In addition, the literacy component has extended the completion rate for the alcohol and drug recovery program to 80 percent, up from 55 percent.

LIP addresses the practical needs of its students. Participants learn how to fill out job applications, read the classifieds, and balance a checkbook. They also have a class on the driver's license exam and a preparation course in math for the GED. Because the recovery program is so goal-oriented, Rioux has chosen to use the whole-word methodology instead of phonics. Although he has not tried phonics at the rehabilitation centers, Rioux says that phonics is "too childish" and would bore his students. Residents want a pragmatic approach that can help them get a job when they leave the program, he explains. Work "means something to their sobriety."

Absence of Accountability

Despite some successful efforts to teach people to read and write, the lack of accountability in most literacy programs remains a major concern. In 1986, a report by the Federal Interagency Committee on Education (FICE) attempted to detail the federal programs that deal with adult illiteracy and their annual expenditures. What resulted was a 200-page morass of numbers about 14 different agencies administering 79 different literacy-related programs. Very few of these programs even know how much they spent on adult education, much less whether their efforts were successful.

The 14 agencies identified $348 million authorized for literacy activities in fiscal year 1985. According to some reports, however, there are "significant unreported dollars spent on literacy activities in many agencies." But others say that much of the money allocated for literacy is not actually spent. Forrest Chisman says, "At most $1 billion to $2 billion is available at the federal level, and much less is surely spent." An independent consulting firm, the Cosmos Corporation, recently updated the FICE report at the behest of Congress. It estimated that the federal government spent $218 million in fiscal year 1989 on adult literacy. By its own admission, however, the Cosmos figure is not completely accurate—it excluded major programs by the Departments of Labor and Health and Human Services because the departments themselves do not know how much they spent.

The discrepancies between these estimates arise because most government programs dealing with illiteracy make block grants to the states, which in turn dole out the money to state-wide programs. There are only very general stipulations on how the money should be distributed and very little reporting on how it was spent. Many literacy activities of the federal government fall under a larger umbrella of community service, employee training, or refugee assistance programs. The states are authorized to use the money for literacy but they are not required to do so.

The five main federal agencies dealing with adult illiteracy are the Departments of Education, Labor, Health and Human Services, Defense, and Justice. The Education Department spent $193 million in fiscal year 1990 for block grants to the states under the Adult Education Act. Ninety-nine percent of the money goes to local education agencies, which must meet minimal requirements such as spending 10 percent of their grant on correctional education and 10 percent on "special experimental demonstration projects and teacher training," according to one Education Department official. In applying for grants, states must evaluate their own literacy efforts, although the Education Department does not require that programs be proved successful in order to receive grants.

Labor also gives grants to the states through the Job Training Partnership Act, in the way of $4 billion a year. Some of this goes to adult literacy programs, though it is not clear how much.

Some of the $1 billion Health and Human Services is authorized to spend through its Job Opportunities and Basic Skills Training (JOBS) program goes for literacy classes for Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) recipients. States have broad discretion for spending the money, and HHS does not know how much goes for adult literacy. As of yet, there are no requirements that state literacy programs demonstrate their success, although the department is planning to establish "performance standards" in the future.

The Defense Department's appropriations of $26 million are more clearly defined. The money goes toward upgrading skills of military personnel, be it through adult basic education classes or vocational training. This clarity of mission has brought them much success, and the military serves as a model of accountability for other literacy programs.

Like Defense, the Justice Department also knows where its money is going. It spent about $30 million on education programs in federal prisons in 1990, with $7.5 million going for literacy training. In addition, the Justice Department spends small amounts on citizenship education and training.

With the exceptions of the military and the Department of Justice, there are almost no methods or techni-

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ques used to measure program success. Neither HHS nor Labor knows whether the programs supported by their funding are successful. The military judges success according to whether or not students reach specific reading levels, which vary according to service. For literacy programs in federal prisons, success means reaching the sixth-grade level in reading, which is evaluated by standardized tests.

In addition to the hundreds of millions spent by the federal government, non-federal expenditures on adult illiteracy came to $510 million in fiscal year 1988, according to the Department of Education. Often non-federal programs receive generous federal grants, which all too often promotes wasteful spending. For example, the Department of Education encourages large expenditures on reading materials. One of the department's criteria in awarding grants to outstanding adult education programs is that curricula and materials "reflect recent trends in delivery of services." In other words, literacy programs are rewarded for following trends rather than tried-and-true methods. Another guideline is that "instructional materials, designed for adults not children, are up-to-date, free of sex and/or cultural bias, [and] bilingual/bicultural where necessary." Computer-assisted instruction is also suggested. Success in raising grade levels of reading is not a criterion.

Need for Testing

Despite the problems with the existing federal literacy programs, both houses of Congress have proposed legislation to increase expenditures without amending the major flaws in the current system. The literacy bills sponsored by Senator Paul Simon (D–IL) and Representative Thomas Sawyer (D–OH) contain no efforts to increase accountability. They do not ask whether existing programs are successful in teaching people to read and write, nor do they require that recipients of grants report their success, or lack thereof. The proposed legislation would also create a national center for literacy to coordinate existing literacy efforts, and perhaps even a cabinet-level post for literacy. But given the problems with existing programs, it is more likely that such legislation will only add another layer of bureaucracy that channels funding away from the important task of teaching people to read.

The federal government's lack of accountability with respect to literacy funding is passed on to the local literacy programs. Often dependent on federal or private funding, these programs are not strict about evaluating the success of their students, teachers, or teaching methods. Because learning to read as an adult can take years, literacy programs often determine success according to short-term goals. Echoing the popular wisdom of most literacy experts, Linda Lowen, communications associate for Literacy Volunteers of America, says, "Success is determined by the individual's goals." The student's goal may be as limited as reading a bus schedule or passing a driver's license test, or more complex, such as reading the Bible. While it is important for students to set goals and to meet them, it is also important for literacy programs to determine how well they are doing in making people literate.

Testing students when they enter a literacy program and when they leave can tell us more about how far they have progressed. But literacy programs are often sketchy on their testing data. With testing comes accountability and also embarrassment, for both students and administrators. It may take some students years to raise their reading levels; others drop out after the first few weeks. It reflects badly on a literacy program if overall statistics show few gains in skill levels. But testing remains the most accurate means of judging an individual's success and that of a literacy program.

The question should not be, "How much money did we spend?" or "How many people joined our program?" but rather, "How many people did we teach to read and write?"

With testing, we can better determine how the crusade against illiteracy is faring, and whether our present efforts need revision. Although the status quo may be more comfortable for literacy program administrators, it does little for the adults in need. The entire field of literacy would benefit from a comprehensive shakedown.

While we cannot control an individual's desire to learn, we should insist that literacy programs teach those who are willing to learn. The question should not be, "How much money did we spend?" or "How many people joined our program?" but rather, "How many people did we teach to read and write?"

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Low-Tax Liberal

Governor Douglas Wilder Calls for Fiscal Responsibility with Compassion

An Interview by Adam Meyerson

Until several months ago Governor L. Douglas Wilder of Virginia was widely considered the front-runner for the Democratic vice-presidential nomination in 1992. Then President Bush broke his tax promise, and Mario Cuomo and Bill Bradley stumbled badly in the November elections. Governor Wilder has now emerged as a leading potential contender for the presidency itself.

Wilder has the potential to unite the Democratic Party in a presidential election for the first time since the LBJ landslide of 1964. Any Democratic candidate in 1992 will most likely benefit from an end to the Cold War, because the party will no longer be as bitterly divided between left and center over anti-Communism. But Wilder could further unite his party in two important ways. As a black elected governor of a Southern state, he can both protect the Democratic Party's black base and appeal to southern whites. And with his strong support for Israel and his denunciation of PLO terrorism, Wilder could heal the black–Jewish rift that has been so damaging for the Democratic coalition. A united Democratic Party would pose problems for the GOP in any election, but would be especially threatening if President Bush faces a conservative rebellion in his own party.

Wilder's second potential trump card is his position that budget deficits should be closed by spending cuts rather than tax increases. Should he stick to this commitment in Virginia, even as projections of state revenues continue to decline, he will stand out from other potential Democratic candidates on the issue of fiscal responsibility. While appealing to Democratic constituencies on issues such as abortion, civil rights, and government aid to the poor, he may also be able to run to the right of Bush on issues of overall spending and taxation—and attract many independents and Republicans to the Democratic ticket.

Wilder's emphasis on cutting government waste and privatizing services better delivered by business may put him at odds with one of the Democratic Party's biggest constituencies—the public-sector unions. But should Wilder become a serious contender, the union movement will find it very difficult to oppose the first black with a good chance to become president.

I interviewed Governor Wilder in his Richmond office in early December 1990, shortly before it was announced that Virginia revenue projections would be $1.9 billion short, rather than $1.4 billion short, of what had been previously expected. We discussed the principles he is using to cut spending in Virginia and how they might apply to the federal government; his views of education, crime, and affirmative action; some of his positions on foreign policy; and where he thinks President Bush would be most vulnerable in 1992.

—A.M.

Policy Review: **In sharp contrast to President Bush, you have kept your campaign promise not to raise taxes. Instead, faced with a $1.4 billion deficit in the Virginia budget, you cut projected government spending by over 5 percent. Why was it important to you as a Democrat to hold the line on taxes?**

Wilder: Any elected official, Democrat or Republican, has the responsibility to spend the taxpayers' money as he would his own in his business or in his home. Sometimes those of us in elected or appointed office forget that the only reason to raise taxes is for necessities.

When I said in my campaign that I saw no need to raise taxes, I was looking at revenue projections based on expectations of a robust Virginia economy. Then, when I came into office, I was advised that there was a shortfall from those projections. I didn't consider new taxes, though, because there were areas of unnecessary spending that could be cut. Having been involved in state government for 20 years, I knew there was fat.

When we cut this fat, people cried that we were cutting the muscle. But there's a difference between muscle and hard fat. Hard fat accumulates over the years, as one-time spending propositions are carried over from one budget to the next, and people start to say we have to have this program when in fact we don't.

My emphasis on limiting spending rather than raising taxes is not simply a question of honoring my campaign pledge. It's also a matter of my own personal philosophy: I don't believe in writing a check until the money's in the bank, and I don't believe in wasteful spending. And

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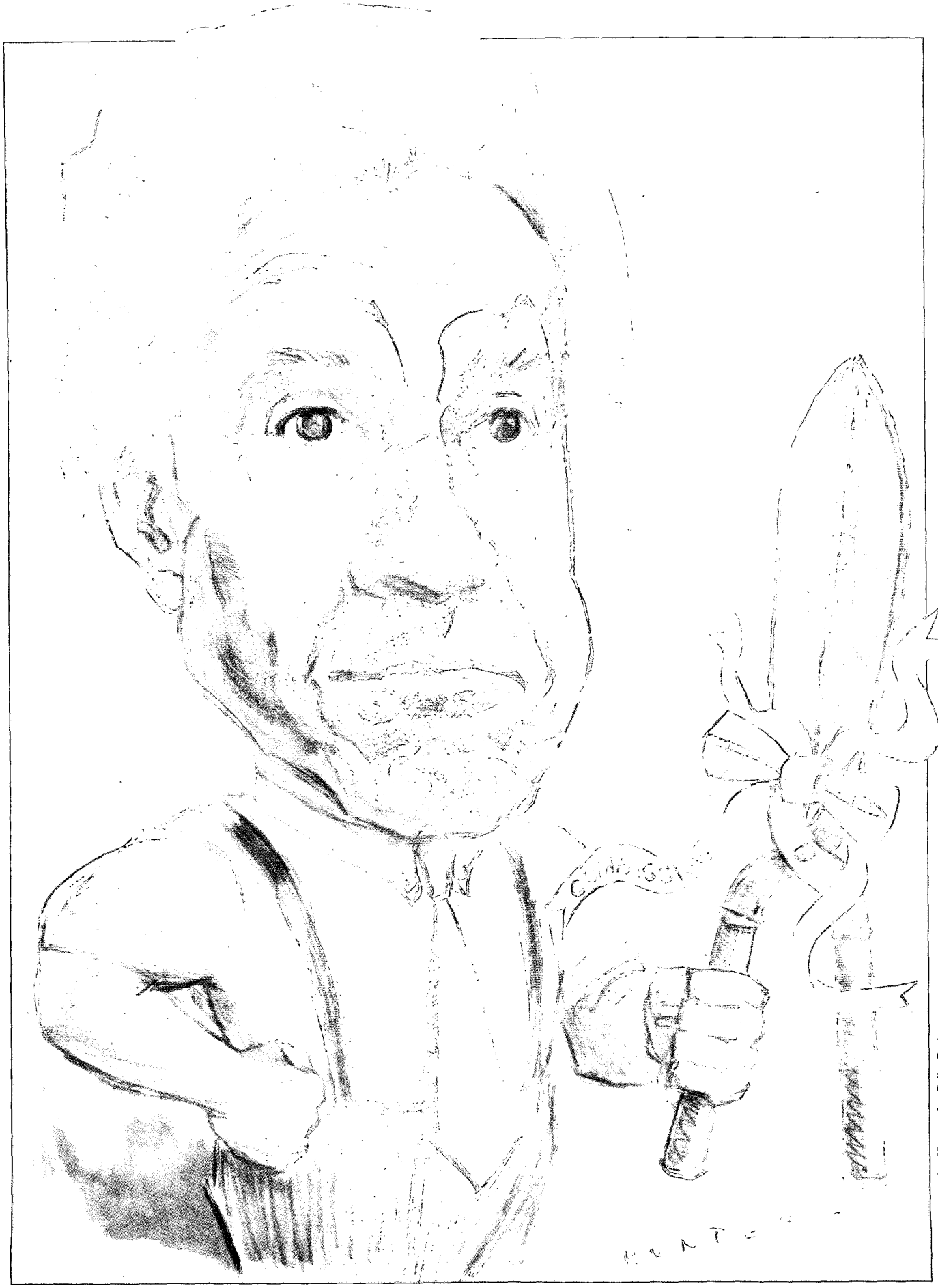

Drawing by Alexander Hunter for *Policy Review*

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I think the shortfall in revenues presents me with an opportunity to streamline government more closely to what government has a responsibility to do, without as much resistance as I would face if there were more ample funds to go around. I never intended, nor do I intend now, to resort to higher taxes. That, in my judgment, is the ultimate of last resorts.

***P.R.:* What principles are you using to cut spending?**

Wilder: The central principle is fiscal responsibility guided by compassion. We have to put the necessities before the niceties, to be certain that the things we are funding are things that government truly has a responsibility to fund, and at the same time to be certain that we do not cut any essential delivery of services.

To have different standards for different racial groups says that they can't do the job unless the standards are lowered. I would be opposed to any lowering of standards for anybody.

We will not reduce direct aid payments to the poor or the medically needy. We will not curtail essential public safety functions.

At the same time I have asked every state agency in Virginia—including the office of the governor—to reduce expenditures. We have to rethink our commitment of state funds to private museums, foundations, and attractions. We've had to trim funding, for example, of the Jamestown–Yorktown Foundation and the natural history museum, which serve laudable purposes but are not necessities for government. We have to continue a moratorium on state building construction for all but the most essential projects. State employees must forgo planned salary increases. I myself am taking a pay cut.

Layoffs will occur, and we have to make every effort to minimize their effect on people. But we have to recognize that the role of government is to deliver essential services, not to be the employer of last resort.

***P.R.:* You attacked the budget deal between Bush and the congressional leadership, saying it was a victory of the "Inside Washington" party at the expense of "Middle America and Forgotten America." Instead of raising taxes, you said the president and Congress could have cut spending in 1991 by $50 billion—$10 billion to $20 billion in the military, and another $25 billion to $30 billion in "waste, overhead, and unnecessary" expenditures. Would you be more specific about the kinds of programs that a fiscally responsible federal government should think about cutting?**

Wilder: An editorial in the *Wall Street Journal* compared our budget performance in Virginia with what the federal government was doing, and said that if Washington had gone our route, they could have cut $72 billion.

Here's an illustration. We're eliminating 99 positions in the state Department of Education, and in the process eliminating five layers of bureaucracy. There used to be eight layers, now there are three. Our next question is, do we really need three? We're going to look at it. All these layers of bureaucracy had very little to do with the service orientation of education, but instead were more regulatory.

The federal government is replete with regulatory involvement rather than service. We have the same number of employees in the U.S. Department of Agriculture as we had when the country was 30 to 35 percent agricultural. There's certainly an excess of staff in Congress. You have to have two people in every staff position in Congress—one for the majority, one for the minority—both doing the same job.

We've been coming up with substantial savings in Virginia by cutting back on unnecessary mailing and printing. Congress could do the same. It's amazing how much stuff Congress sends that people throw right in the trash. The budget compromise came up at the last minute with $500,000 for a museum for somebody, which congressmen didn't even know that they had voted for until afterward. For Congress to give itself a raise when the deficit is going up so high is unconscionable. So when people tell me they can't cut spending, it's not a question of listening. I don't even hear it.

There have to be enormous savings in the administrative expenses of federal programs. The Department of Housing and Urban Development wasted $8 billion, none of it going to low- and moderate-income families. We could have settled the savings and loan problem 10 years ago for what some said was $5 billion. Now, because we delayed, we're told we face costs of a trillion dollars over the next 10 years, and $500 billion in the short term.

And, while ensuring an adequate defense, we've finally got to do something about military spending fraud. Billions of dollars have been spent on weapons systems that do not work. Billions were wasted as a result of overcharges. And as we're discovering with Operation Desert Shield, despite a trillion-dollar buildup in military expenditures, Washington somehow failed to allocate sufficient funding for machinery essential to regional conflicts, such as transport vehicles for our forces and conventional weaponry. Somebody should be held accountable.

***P.R.:* Virginia is having some difficulty financing new road construction through the private sector. Do you see private construction and operation of roads as an attractive alternative? Are there other activities of state government where privatization might be an attractive way to reduce taxpayer costs and at the same time**

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ensure that essential services are provided? Is privatization also an attractive idea for the federal government?

Wilder: We already have a private toll road starting up in northern Virginia, the Dulles extension, which is a prototype for the country. I'd like to see it become successful, because it could become a model for many of our transportation needs, including rail. Rail is going to have to be one of the solutions to our traffic problems not just in Virginia but in many parts of our country. And we're likely to have the best rail service if it's privatized, as it is in much of Japan.

We're studying now whether medium-security prisons might be run better under private management. Liquor stores are another possible opportunity for privatization, although I do not want this considered while I am in office, because I have friends and a relative who are involved in the retail wine business.

Virginia would be in serious trouble if we had to depend on state-owned or state-operated health facilities without private hospitals and doctors' offices. There are many areas where government should look into privatization, because people usually work more effectively and put in their best efforts when they can make profits through good service.

P.R.: **You frequently criticize the federal government for fiscal irresponsibility. Are the current budget deficits primarily due to the 1980s tax cuts and other Reagan economic policies? Or are they due more to the federal government's inability to restrict its spending?**

Wilder: The basic problem has been the failure to control spending. Legislation like the '86 tax plan and Gramm-Rudman were hailed as panaceas that would solve our problems, but they didn't address the fundamental issue of controlling spending.

The '86 tax plan wasn't just Reagan's plan; it was everybody's plan in Washington. Everyone said it would rev up the economy by giving tax breaks. But who got the tax breaks? Who created the bubble that forced the middle-income people to pay more taxes than those at the higher level? More billionaires were created than ever, while at the same time parents with children were constituting the fastest-growing number of homeless people in our country.

Gramm-Rudman falsely led the public to believe that it would reduce spending automatically, because otherwise the government would shut down. Have you ever heard such nonsense! How does the government shut down? Gramm-Rudman turned out to be a recipe for "spending as usual."

We haven't seen any commitment in Washington to limiting spending. Presidents have cried for the line-item veto. Like most governors in this country, I have this power and know how important it is. Some scholars think the president has this power already. Why doesn't the president veto line items, and then let the court decide if he has this authority?

But the line-item veto is an afterthought—taking something away after it's been put in. Why not put the case before the American people by sending down a balanced budget, which has not been done in the last several years, and promising to veto any congressional budget legislation which differs substantially?

P.R.: **Are taxpayers in Virginia and other states getting their money's worth from education?**

Wilder: No, I don't think so. We spend more money on education than any other country, but we don't get much bang for our buck. We also spend more on health care than any other country, with similar problems. The Canadians love their health system, and they pay far less than we do. Critics of the Canadian health system say it doesn't offer the extended coverage that we have. But it seems to do a very good job for most patients.

When we cut fat, people cried that we were cutting muscle. But there's a difference between muscle and hard fat.

We have been woefully inadequate in vocational education. Seventy percent of the jobs available in this country don't require a college education. Yet our high schools are organized as though every student needed a college education to get ahead. Many students become disenchanted because they do not achieve in this setting. They drop out, and it is usually not until their middle 20s that they get a job they can comfortably call their own. And then they have to be re-trained.

My goal for Virginia is to require the same degree of education up to the 10th grade, and then give students an option of studying vocations on an apprenticeship basis in private sector workplaces. The apprenticeships would be accompanied by academic training. Students would learn the technology and the mathematics—geometry, algebra, and calculus—associated with their jobs. They would learn what quality control means on the line. The teaching would be based on real-world job situations, not classroom abstractions, and the students would be expected to learn every facet of the manufacturing process. Our education should ensure that if the company vice president can't come into work one day, the guy on the line can do his job.

In higher education, we're not demanding enough teaching from professors. The research that professors do is important. But I do not think it is right that at our colleges and universities many students do not know professors well enough to get letters of recommendation from them for work or graduate school.

P.R.: **Are you interested in school choice?**

Wilder: We're studying choice with our Governor's Commission on Educational Opportunity for All Virginians.

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We want to be certain, however, that public funds not be re-channeled into a system of exclusion, with school systems of advantaged and bright children out-funding other districts, and the gaps growing wider.

For similar reasons, there's an important federal role in education. I'm not talking about a federal curriculum, or federal regulations dictating what schools should teach. But the federal government has the responsibility to make sure that people are not denied educational opportunities because of their geographic location or their economic status.

***P.R.:* In making our streets and neighborhoods safer, how important is it to lock up criminals, and how important is it to address what you said in your inaugural speech were the root causes of crime—"illiteracy, poverty, and joblessness"?**

Wilder: There are people who are threats to society by the very nature of the acts they commit, and they should be separated from society for as long as is necessary to bring about some modicum of rehabilitation. At the same time we have to understand that most of the people who go into prisons are going to come out. Our job is to be certain that, when they come out, they have not been harmed while in prison and their proclivities for crime have not been furthered. This puts a premium on efforts for rehabilitation and education in prison.

Education in general is also essential for fighting crime. The more money we can spend on at-risk youngsters the better. We've identified some 17,000 at-risk youngsters in Virginia, and currently we are reaching half of them. I'm not going to be satisfied until we reach them all.

We spend more on education than any other country, but we don't get much bang for our buck.

***P.R.:* You've made it quite clear that you think abortion is a private decision with which government should not interfere. Quite apart from the question of what the law says, are there any circumstances where you think abortion is wrong?**

Wilder: I have said I would support legislation that provides for parental notification or consent for certain minors. But my view is that abortion is a personal decision where the government shouldn't interfere, and also that very few men can really put themselves in the place of the woman making the decision. This doesn't make me pro- or anti-abortion. It means I trust women to make the appropriate decision for themselves, with the opportunity for consultation with family and loved ones, and medical authorities.

***P.R.:* Martin Luther King had a dream of a society where a man would be judged by the content of his character, not the color of his skin. Is it consistent with this dream for members of different racial groups to be admitted to college according to different standards?**

Wilder: I think it would be wrong. I have criticized the president for vetoing the Civil Rights Act of 1990, which is not a quota bill. But to have different standards means that minorities can't compete, and it says that they can't do the job unless the standards are lowered. And I would be opposed to any lowering of standards for anybody.

***P.R.:* Is it consistent with Dr. King's dream for a city (such as Richmond) to set aside certain percentages of its contracts for members of different groups?**

Wilder: The Supreme Court ruled that the Richmond set-asides were unconstitutional. I think some of the authorities in Richmond who participated in drawing up the legislation conceded some of that point, because of the arbitrary way the numbers for groups were arrived at. Redressing wrongs is one thing; doing it arbitrarily is another. The question is, How do you go about affirmative action? What is affirmative, and what is what some would call "reverse discrimination"? I don't think anyone should be fired to make room for someone else in terms of a job. But I don't think anyone should be refused a job because of any artificial considerations, such as race, gender, class, or religion.

***P.R.:* How do you respond to the argument (made by scholars such as William Julius Wilson and Thomas Sowell) that civil rights and affirmative action laws have opened opportunities for middle-class blacks, but have been much less helpful and perhaps even counterproductive for the so-called underclass?**

Wilder: The same argument can be made about some of the programs that started in the '60s that never filtered down to the people for whom they were originally intended. It may well be time for a reassessment of social policy. A number of scholars on both sides, black and white, are saying we should provide better health care for all, better education for all, better work opportunities for all—and then let positions go to those who take advantage of the education and skills training that have been made available.

***P.R.:* Which U.S. foreign and defense policies, if any, helped bring about the extraordinary changes we are seeing in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe?**

Wilder: The system in those countries was calculated for failure at the outset, because it sought to treat humans as other than individuals, suppressed aspirations, and failed to promote thrift and hard work, responsibility and perseverance. The system was an-

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tithetical to human achievement, and it was just a matter of time before it broke down. By contrast, I don't think it's any wonder that America survives. Our country is founded on democratic principles and free enterprise, and in America the spirit has the opportunity to soar as high and as far as it can.

It was amazing how the Berlin Wall fell without a shot being fired, that what took place in Hungary took place without the despotic reaction of Russian tanks that occurred in 1956. Some would say that this is not going to happen in China where we had the Tiananmen Square massacre. But give it time, and it will.

I don't know that we can take great credit for what's taking place, other than that our beacon light gave them something to emulate, and that we were willing to assist and provide the opportunities for those who could escape, and to constantly hold the Russian Bear at bay when it sought to put all of us under the veil of oppression, whether be it in Afghanistan or other areas where democratic principles and freedoms were crushed.

***P.R.:* Under what circumstances would it be necessary for the U.S. to go to war with Iraq?**

Wilder: The national interest and national security, so often indistinguishable, would have been threatened. Negotiations would have failed. And the case would have been made to the American people that this was the last resort, that this country had done all that was reasonably possible to avoid war, and that it was clearly within the interests of the American people to send the troops in. In the absence of those conditions, I don't think war would be warranted.

I haven't heard the president tell us yet why war is in our interests. I've heard about eight different reasons. One was naked aggression; another was jobs; another was our economic interests. And then, on Thanksgiving, the president said it was the future, that it was freedom, and that it was the lives of certain people. I know that most Americans are patriotic and they will allow nothing to impinge upon the security of this nation, but there are any number of nagging doubts as to whether the case has been made, notwithstanding any sanction given by the U.N. resolution to use whatever degree of force is necessary.

Why are we there in very disproportionate numbers compared with other countries who should be there? Why are we paying more for oil when the oil we are protecting for our friends would be worthless to them if we were not there? How long are we going to be there? Is it until the withdrawal from Kuwait? Or is it for a protracted period of time? Will there be rotation of the troops? Will there be a draft? If so, who's going to go? Would people be selected to die based on wealth, class, or other conditions? Or would there be an indiscriminate lottery? A lot of questions still have to be answered.

***P.R.:* What are the most important statements that you think the Democratic platform of 1992 should include?**

Wilder: Fiscal responsibility with compassion. This means getting our fiscal house in order, making certain that we limit spending and rid the country of waste in government. It means making the American dream possible for all Americans—allowing our youngsters to believe that they can buy a home one day and have it paid for in their lifetimes, that they can work at a productive calling and be proud of it and be paid for it, and that there will be fairness with reference to our tax policy.

Always strong on defense, but against wastefulness in military spending. A strong and real commitment to engage in the war on drugs and not just rhetoric. And an understanding that the values of this country will be restored by a renewed emphasis on youth and families.

The role of government is to deliver essential services, not to be the employer of last resort.

***P.R.:* Is George Bush beatable in 1992?**

Wilder: I think he can be beaten, although I don't think that it's going to be easy for anybody to win.

***P.R.:* And where do you think President Bush is most vulnerable?**

Wilder: The most important power of that office is leadership—the awesome powers associated with the ability to articulate a clear and concise agenda, and to stick to your word.

***P.R.:* What do you see as President Reagan's greatest achievements and greatest failures?**

Wilder: As a master of getting a message over, there are very few people like him in history. He was very good at gaining the respect of the nation. People like him, whether they agreed with what he did or not. One of the big problems during his presidency was deterioration of our infrastructure, a problem we still have.

***P.R.:* Who are your political heroes?**

Wilder: Harry Truman. I like his plainness, his bluntness, his not really being concerned about whether people liked him or not. He's one of my favorites. I like Abraham Lincoln because of his ability to rise from humble origins, and the depth of his concern for the totality of the nation.

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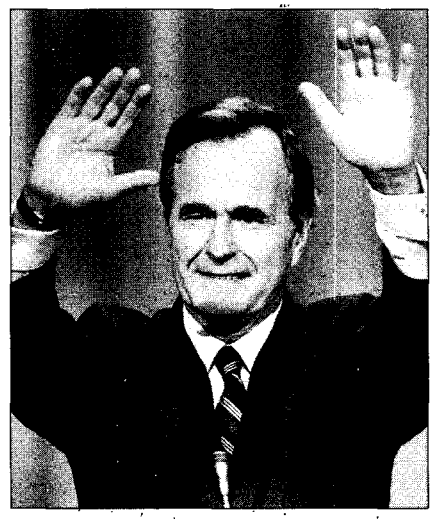
Sophomore Slump

Mid-Term Grades for the Bush Administration

Martin Anderson, Gary L. Bauer, Mark Blitz, Edward H. Crane, James C. Miller III, Amy Moritz, Burton Yale Pines

In November 1990, *Policy Review* asked a number of conservative leaders to offer mid-term grades and evaluations of President George Bush and several White House officials and cabinet members. Evaluations were received from Martin Anderson, senior fellow of the Hoover Institution and White House domestic policy adviser 1981-82; Gary L. Bauer, president of Family Research Council and White House domestic policy adviser 1987-88; Mark Blitz, director of political and social studies at the Hudson Institute; Edward H. Crane, president of the libertarian Cato Institute; James C. Miller III, chairman of Citizens for a Sound Economy and director of the Office of Management and Budget 1985-88; Amy Moritz, president of the National Center for Public Policy Research; and Burton Yale Pines, senior vice president at The Heritage Foundation and associate publisher of this magazine.

President of the United States



George Bush

Domestic Policy

B- ANDERSON: A potential "A" president, his mid-term grade is pulled way down by a surprisingly poor performance on budget and economic policy. He easily scored high on defense, foreign policy, and most domestic issues, but he studied with the wrong friends—Brady, Darman, and Sununu—before the big budget test this fall, which he flunked. In the extracurricular activity of politics he has been somewhat clumsy of foot, signing a major income tax-increase bill just before the off-term elections. Well, the final exam is not until November 1992, and with a change in economic tutors he could still graduate *summa cum laude.* [This is an overall grade, combining domestic and foreign policy.]

C BAUER: Although Bush gets a "C" overall, he receives an "A+" for the personal example he sets for family life and concern for children. The symbolic value of a First Family that is truly a functional family should not be underestimated. Furthermore, having worked with George Bush at the Republican National Committee in the '70s, I know first-hand what a decent man he is. It does not surprise me at all that so many people show such a strong personal loyalty to him.

A "B" on the abortion issue. His vetoes have been stalwart and courageous. However, one cannot believe that the "big tent" rhetoric that was being pushed by the RNC early in 1990 came down without the president's approval. Whatever its intent, that rhetoric was a big kick in the teeth to pro-lifers. So, on the whole the grade is high, but not the highest. (Souter's performance will bust the curve on this one, one way or another.)

A "D" on other social issues. This president twice invited gay activists to White House ceremonies; gave support to an unrestricted National Endowment for the Arts, showing no understanding of the difference between censorship and sponsorship; and signed off on tax increases for American families.

C BLITZ: Although the president is not living up to conservatives' wishes, he is still much better than Governor Dukakis would have been. He cer-

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tainly deserves credit for his veto of a quota bill that was masquerading as a civil-rights measure, and for securing some reasonable improvements to the worst versions of the Clean Air legislation. But he has done nothing significant to cut spending, despite the golden opportunity offered by his tax pledge. Nor has he advanced regulatory reform, despite his experience under President Reagan. His interest in voluntarism makes clear that he believes that American citizenship means more than selfish materialism. But he has not found either the rhetoric or the policies to help reestablish the proper combination of self-reliance and patriotism. The Souter nomination is emblematic of the Bush presidency so far: he is much better than anyone Dukakis would have selected, but not as good a nominee as several others that President Bush could have chosen.

CRANE: George Bush will go down as one of the worst presidents in American history. He is paradigmatic proof of Ronald Reagan's disdain for the appointments process. As should have been obvious from the start, Bush wouldn't recognize a political principle if he were to trip over one.

What was less obvious is that his political judgment is so flawed he willingly and for no reason gave away the one major advantage his party had over the other guys. The Republicans were the anti-tax party and are now the dumb party. President Bush cheerfully led his troops away from tax cuts and into Clean Air Act environmental psychobabble at precisely the time voters were starting a tax revolt and telling the Greenies to put a cork in it.

Well, the Republicans get what they deserve. During the Republican primary debate in Dallas, Bush was the only candidate, when asked whether government was the problem or the solution, to embrace Leviathan. I'm a creature of government, he enthused. Read my lips: we'd have been a lot better off if George Bush had written speeches for President Noonan.

MILLER: Inattention to regulatory problems, evidenced by the atrophy of OMB's Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs and the appointment of zealous regulators, has resulted in a regulatory binge that is partly responsible for the current economic downturn. Although the president has been courageous and effective in vetoing some congressional regulatory efforts (for example, parental/medical leave), he has encouraged others that will produce little in the way of identifiable benefits and will lead to enormous waste (specifically, the Clean Air Act).

More important is Bush's incredible blunder in renouncing his no-new-taxes pledge. His credibility has suffered a mortal blow: can he promise anything in the 1992 campaign without evoking giggles from the audience? The ensuing budget deal is a disaster: the biggest tax increase in history will serve only to finance increased spending. And the political fallout is just beginning. Even more important is the lack of specificity in the administration's domestic policy. For what does it stand?

MORITZ: A leader may be successful, and he will always be respected, if he pursues, with conviction, what he believes to be right. A leader can never be successful, and will not be respected, if he lacks conviction and will not define "right." The latter is the essence of the crisis of the Bush presidency.

"Stay the Course" was President Reagan's slogan. "Where's the Course?" is fitting for Mr. Bush. President Reagan believed in great principles and had the confidence to assert them; President Bush lacks both belief and confidence.

Leading a nation requires more than intelligence, experience, and a knowledge of the workings of government. Much has been made of President Bush's *noblesse oblige* belief in service to the people. If the president truly believes that an individual should place his own interests below those of the community, he should reassess the unique challenges of his office and whether he is suited, by temperament, to meet these challenges. If he is, and will do so, all the better. But, if he cannot, there is no disgrace—indeed, it would be a matter of high principle—for the president to conclude that he should not be a candidate for reelection in 1992.

PINES: The president descended into what looks like a classic sophomore slump as he seems to have forgotten why he was elected president. Made dizzy, perhaps, by his once-soaring popularity, distracted, perhaps, by the glitter of foreign policy and the eagerness of foreign leaders to take his phone calls, and blinded, perhaps, by the pomp and ceremonies of office, he seems to ignore domestic issues. At best, he is reactive. At worst, he risks being a Herbert Hoover/William Howard Taft one-term president. His high-tax-and-high-spending-and-high-regulation policies are sabotaging economic growth, destroying jobs, and permitting government to expand faster than at any time in a decade. His once-fine words about education and environmental policy are allowed to be torpedoed completely by the bureaucracy. And his surrounding himself with a praetorian wall of senior aides shields him from the courageous but faint voices of friends inside and outside the White House daring to tell him that he has no clothes and that the Democrats, with whom he beamingly poses for photographers, are making a national fool of him.

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George Bush

Foreign Policy

I **BLITZ:** Incomplete, pending the outcome in the Gulf. The president has managed many individual situations well, but he has still not sufficiently thought through his strategic direction. In Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, for example, it is hard to see how he could have done much better. Events there had more to do with Havel, Walesa, Reagan, and Gorbachev than they did with Bush, but the president did not make things worse. He correctly realized that there was little we could do to slow down the reunification of Germany, and that what is important now is to help the Germans develop responsibly and to keep a reasonable number of American troops in Europe as a stabilizing force. The president's response to Iraq's aggression in the Gulf has been able so far, with one exception: he needs to prepare the American people better for war, if he thinks that war will be necessary. He also needs to consider carefully what a friendly and politically sensible Middle East policy should look like once Iraq's aggression has been overcome. It is not clear that he has yet done this. He also apparently lacks a sound sense of what our policy should be toward China, Japan, and much of the Third World. In general, the president needs to discuss and consider more carefully the concrete balance between nationalism and internationalism, and democracy and self-interest, that should animate our policies. Otherwise he will fall prey to lurching between misplaced realpolitik (*e.g.*, China) and dangerous abstractions (*e.g.*, the New World Order).

F **CRANE:** After a good start in which he resisted zealous right-wing lobbying and opted to let events in Eastern Europe unfold on their own, Bush's foreign policy has unraveled like a cheap Russian sweater. His dangerous and costly vision of a New World Order foresees a United States meddling in the affairs of virtually every nation in the world, through covert action, occasional military intervention, and foreign aid bribes. His cheerleading for an increased role for the IMF, World Bank, and United Nations is nothing but bad news for the Third World (not to mention American taxpayers).

But sending U.S. troops to the Middle East has to qualify as the worst foreign policy blunder since Vietnam. It's not surprising that the economic wizards at the CIA (those crack economists who put the Soviet GNP at 65 percent of ours) are reported to have convinced Bush of the economic necessity of sending in the troops. It turns out, however, that oil is a fungible commodity.

But this war is not going to be about oil, it's going to be about making the world safe for...for what? For feudal polygamous hereditary despots? The president, in his I-am-*not*-a-wimp haste to rationalize the $300-billion military–industrial complex in a post-Cold War world, has put himself between a rock and a hard spot. We can only hope that he has the courage to lose face instead of losing thousands of young lives.

B+ **MILLER:** Give Bush his due for helping to fashion the Reagan–Bush program of national security in the 1980s—a policy that *enabled* the heralded reforms in Eastern Europe and the worldwide repudiation of socialism. Moreover, he has played these reforms just about right—avoiding the temptation to take too much credit, while at the same time being fully supportive. The administration is inclined to bail out former Communist regimes too quickly, and Bush's cozying up to the Chinese so soon after Tiananmen Square sent the wrong signal. But on the whole Bush has proved to be an exceptionally capable statesman.

With respect to military initiatives, Bush's invasion of Panama was warranted and was carried out with precision. However, he was also lucky: can you imagine the public outcry if Noriega were still on the loose and U.S. troops were still looking for him?

Overall, the president's response to the Iraqi invasion was appropriate, given the circumstances. And he has been masterful in orchestrating international condemnation of Saddam Hussein. However, U.S. leaders did not convey adequately to the Iraqi leader the likely repercussions of his invasion of Kuwait, and in that sense our Middle East policy failed. Moreover, the president (perhaps distracted by the budget mess and the election) has failed to marshal the domestic support he needs to see this conflict through. One reason is that his early rationale for military action was misdirected. The loss of Saudi/Kuwaiti oil would not raise the global price of crude by very much. Rather than a need to carry out the largest antitrust intervention in history, the appropriate rationale is that of containing and subjugating a Middle East madman who, if left unchecked, could cause all manner of evil in the region.

C+ **PINES:** He is the quintessential general manager, which is not the same as a leader. Explains the details of what he is doing, but fails to provide the vision and sense of purpose that inform Americans and foreigners where he is trying to take the nation. Worse, he has yet to task his administration with defining America's role in the post-Cold War world. Although he manages crises well, he does little—as with Iraq's invasion of Kuwait—to prevent them. Dangerous too is his extraordinary reliance on his personal relations with Gorbachev, blinding Bush to the importance of the USSR's increasingly independent republics. At press time, the jury was out on the Persian Gulf crisis. Bush's grade will plummet if, in spring 1991, American troops are still baking in the desert or if he botches an attack on Iraq; he would have his "A" if he drives the Iraqis out of Kuwait and destroys Iraq's ability to wage war.

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VICE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

Dan Quayle

A **ANDERSON:** The grade is for *vice president*, and at that Quayle is doing an excellent job. All modern grading is on a curve. Compared with Mondale, Ford, Rockefeller, Agnew, Humphrey, and LBJ, Quayle is one of the best of the litter. He has the advantage of extraordinarily low expectations, but so far he has done his job flawlessly. How many serious Quayle gaffes can you think of? He has been especially strong on national defense, championing the crucial Brilliant Pebbles portion of SDI, and there are reports that he was one of the few strong voices privately urging President Bush to say "no" to the budget broccoli his key courtiers served up to him.

A **BAUER:** The vice president has shown a stout heart in facing up to press ridicule; many politicians would have gone to hide in a corner. He has been a strong advocate of social conservative views within the administration, and in many of his speeches. Last but not least, he has shown himself to be highly gifted in choosing staff. Many conservatives fall on their faces in this area; Quayle, on the other hand, has surrounded himself with intelligent and dedicated conservatives.

B+ **BLITZ:** Loyal, as he should be, to President Bush, Vice President Quayle has also done the right things for the Republican Party, and has pushed the administration in a sound direction on practically every policy without stepping over the edge into outright opposition. This is difficult to do, and the vice president has done an important service by making a good conservative case on many issues while still retaining his influence with the president. But he is still unable to shake the public notion that he is not a reasonable successor for president, and until he does so, his vice presidency cannot be completely successful.

D+ **CRANE:** The vice president has proven to be a loyal team player, which would be okay were it not for the fact that he's playing on the Bush administration team. He seems to have completely forgotten his pro-market, anti-tax roots that made him a positive force in the Senate. In the past year he has lobbied against tax cuts (the Moynihan payroll rate reduction) and for tax increases (as a principal cheerleader for the Bush budget lemon). His effort to smear anti-Middle-East-war Republicans is intellectually dishonest.

On the positive side, Quayle has been sound in supporting education tax credits and the civil rights (read: quota) bill veto. His support of term limitations is commendable, but the ham-fisted manner in which he and Bush turned it into a partisan issue in California almost led to the defeat of the otherwise overwhelmingly popular Proposition 140.

B **MILLER:** On the whole, the vice president has been correct on policy—at least if press reports of his privately articulated views are correct. He has prompted a longer-term view of the economy and has provided leadership in the areas of science and technology. He has also urged the president to take a more aggressive, and more partisan, approach to dealing with Congress over the budget. Had Bush listened to Quayle, the budget fiasco could have been avoided.

On the other hand, Quayle has failed to exert the necessary leadership to roll back excessive regulations—part of his responsibility as chairman of the Council on Competitiveness. More important, he has failed to overcome the widespread impression that he is shallow and unprepared for the job of president. Despite a demonstrated competence and effectiveness as a congressman, a senator, and a vice president, his record is still a light under a bushel. He needs to adopt a more serious tone, a more patrician bearing, and a more forthright demeanor when dealing with the press and on TV. And he should do more to publicize his fine work in support of such causes as term limitations and educational choice.

A- **MORITZ:** His unheeded recommendation that the administration should take a more confrontational stance toward the Democrats on spending policy was right on target. He has loyally advocated Bush's policies, but unlike most of the White House has done so without alienating the administration's natural allies or ceasing to be an effective advocate for conservative policies.

The media's preoccupation with assaulting Quayle has probably peaked. Throughout the Reagan years the Left and its media allies, frustrated at Reagan's "Teflon" cover, set up conservative straw men (such as Jim Watt, Ed Meese, and Robert Bork) to kick in Reagan's stead. Quayle-bashing was a continuation of this effective political tactic. But, as Bush has aptly demonstrated that he is no "Teflon president," the tactic is no longer quite so necessary and Quayle will probably soon be let off the hook.

A **PINES:** Quayle has made continual improvement, as he acts and looks increasingly presidential. High points for having the good sense and courage to speak up at cabinet meetings and privately to the president against the Darman–Sununu budget of tax and spending increases. Points too for reinvigorating the Council on Competitiveness, for backing policies to give working-class Americans the means to choose schools for their children, for questioning the conventional wisdom on space policy, for strongly supporting the Strategic Defense Initiative, and for performing skillfully during his tours of Australia, Japan, and Thailand.

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CHIEF OF STAFF

John Sununu

ANDERSON: There must be something in that big corner office in the West Wing that drives men mad when they become chief of staff to the president of the United States. Donald Regan was a great Secretary of the Treasury until he started walking on those red carpets. Hamilton Jordan was a brilliant campaign strategist until he put his feet up and noticed that he had a fireplace. Robert Haldeman was a decent human being, both before and after the time he was chief of staff for Richard Nixon. With the exception of James Baker and Richard Cheney, all former chiefs of staff within our memory have either left the job in ignominy or vanished soon after their time was over. Sununu's sins were going along with a tax increase that broke the president's pledge (something Sununu did not do when he was governor of New Hampshire) and, most important, not ensuring that the president he served was given the widest array of options and advice on the deadly "third rail" of American politics—tax increases.

BAUER: We had hoped to make this grade higher, because of his role in making sure that the anti-family impact of the budget deal was minimized, and in putting through an important pro-family reform, the Supplementary Young Child Credit. We give him tremendous credit for viewing pro-family advocates as legitimate participants in the debate. However, he seems not to have snapped out of the pit-bull mode that he adopted during the budget fight. Unless he drops his Simon Legree attitude toward conservative Republican congressmen, he will become a liability to the president, rather than the asset he has been until recently.

BLITZ: As best one can tell, Sununu remains on the right side of most issues, and without his sitting there, things would be worse. There are two exceptions. He did not pay enough attention to the politics of the budget summit, especially to its effect on other Republicans. He should have done this, especially because he gave himself responsibility for political operations. As for the administration's budget stance, either he lost the battles on taxes and spending and he became too eager a convert, or he did not fight them very hard to begin with. Knowing the drift of Darman, Brady, and President Bush himself, Sununu should have brought in some strong, independent people to help him fight.

CRANE: It is a commonplace inside the Beltway that corporate lobbyists spend more time lobbying the corporate headquarters to go along with deals they've struck with congressional staffs than they do lobbying the staffs on behalf of the corporation. And so it goes with the key conservative in the Bush ad-

ANDERSON: Panama liberated. The Soviets out of Afghanistan. The Berlin Wall down. A standoff—so far—with Saddam Hussein. Germany reunited while NATO stayed united. Communism/socialism still collapsing. The Soviet Union disintegrating into a bunch of capitalist republics. The United States now clearly the dominant nation in the world. Not bad for a country boy from Texas (and Princeton). Sure, he didn't do it all by himself and most of it he inherited from Reagan and Shultz. But, for eight long years Baker was a major player in the developments that made all this possible—the unprecedented economic expansion and the buildup of our national defenses in the 1980s. And most of this time he worked closely with then-Vice President Bush. So far, Baker has given Bush the options, strategies, and counsel in foreign policy that have been missing on the budget and economic policy side. Virtuoso performance.

BLITZ: Incomplete, pending the outcome in the Gulf. Secretary Baker has performed competently, but not outstandingly. His impressive negotiating and tactical skills have not deserted him, and "diplomacy," after all, is a large part of his job. But it is not all of his job. He still sometimes acts in ways typical of an inside operative talking to reporters—denying responsibility for Ambassador Glaspie's speaking inappropriately to Saddam Hussein or claiming that the purpose of our Gulf policy is "jobs"—and forgets that he is a public figure who must win public consent and inspire public confidence. More fundamentally, he still does not appear to be guided by any concrete sense of what he would like the world abroad to look like by the end of his service.

CRANE: Sorry, but anyone associated with the "Sandtrap War" flunks. Baker's bullying of our allies and Arab nations in an effort to create a Potemkin village military coalition in Saudi Arabia will only earn the United States enmity down the road. And this from a man on whose watch Saddam was given the green light to invade Kuwait.

To make matters worse, Baker, whose political convictions are of the same strength and intensity as those held by George Bush, is rather openly running for president. His recent appeals to the Religious Right are nothing if not amusing.

MORITZ: What some administration wag said of the Bush White House also applies aptly to the Baker State Department: "tactics is strategy" and "the long term means 11 o'clock tonight." The Baker policy seems to

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ministration. Sununu doesn't represent conservative views to the administration. He sells the administration's blunders to conservatives, and runs the White House as if his only goal each day were to elicit a favorable headline from the *Washington Post.* Sununu is, in effect, the administration's conservative sterile fruit fly. He should try out his tough guy routine on the big spenders in Congress instead of his friends.

C- **MILLER:** The chief of staff's policy views have been pretty much on target. Moreover, his opposition to congressional excesses and his masterful management of the legislative agenda have resulted in considerable successes.

However, Sununu was co-opted when the president agreed to a budget summit and renounced his no-new-taxes pledge. Choosing to support the president rather than resign, Sununu became an overzealous convert. He not only argued *for* a resolution of the budget impasse by cooperating with the congressional Democrats (at the critical juncture where the president might have walked away from the deal with the support of House Republicans), he has so offended the administration's allies in Congress and the private sector (for example, he threatened to use a chain saw to sever a portion of the anatomy of one critic of the budget deal) that his effectiveness has been compromised.

D **MORITZ:** When President Bush takes aim at his own foot, Sununu brings in the heavy artillery. It is clear that Sununu knows better than to believe that no one can govern successfully without adhering to an overall philosophy; the $140 billion question is, why has Sununu ignored this and instead been an aggressive part of the problem?

Bush needs a far greater sense of why he wants to govern. Sununu is intellectually and philosophically equipped to help him develop it. He should do so. And he should re-aim his artillery: not at his old and trustworthy friends, but at the deceitful Left.

F **PINES:** After an "A-" first year, this once fiercely independent New Englander has become the Patty Hearst of the Bush administration, meekly surrendering to and becoming an eager captive of Washington's permanent establishment. So doing, he champions ever-bigger government requiring ever-higher taxes and ever-greater spending. He has inflicted on the White House a mandatory Orwellian newspeak that transforms spending hikes into cuts, deficit increases into reductions, legislative defeats into victories, loss of GOP congressional seats into gains, Democratic enemies into allies, and conservative friends into enemies. Not since Edith Wilson blocked all access to her husband Woodrow has anyone so quickly and hermetically insulated a president from the outside world of reality. His 11th-hour push to make Bill Bennett head of the GOP would have prevented his flunking altogether; but he failed at this, too.

SECRETARY OF STATE

James A. Baker III

be: never prevent a problem today when you can solve it later. This is fine for dealing with garden weeds but incalculably dangerous for dealing with international conflict. So far, Baker has survived, only through luck, the kind of criticism that results in forced resignation. But "keeping one's fingers crossed" is not an acceptable approach for a Secretary of State.

Baker has surrounded himself with aides who share his strong points and his weak points. This is the hallmark of a man who is more concerned about appearing to be a star than about doing a good job. Baker thus earns the "minus" on his "F"—if there can be anything worse than failing utterly, it is failing without even having good intentions.

C- **PINES:** Baker does well with his American Hemisphere initiatives, particularly the Mexican free trade area, and with policies toward Tokyo, Seoul, and Beijing. Dragging down his overall performance is his policy toward Moscow, where he makes himself the Siamese twin of Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze and appears to want to "save Gorbachev at all costs," thus ignoring (and offending) the emerging independent republics within the USSR. Baker also gets demerits for seeking a Middle East international peace conference, for pandering to New Zealand's anti-American regime, and for caving in to Moscow's pressure for massive concessions at the START strategic arms talks. He is very tardy, moreover, with a blueprint for post-Cold War American foreign policy, thus leaving the State Department with little sense of what American global interests are and how they are to be advanced.

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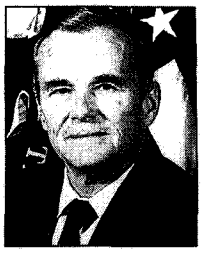
Secretary of the Treasury



Nicholas F. Brady

F ANDERSON: Just goes to prove you should never study from your best friend's notes just because he is your best friend. Better to study with a wise enemy. Nicholas Brady, as Secretary of the Treasury, is and must be the dominant voice when it comes to giving advice on tax matters to the president. It is hard for a president to overrule his Treasury Secretary's counsel on taxes, even harder when he is an old friend. Brady's understanding of economic policy is limited, and his advice on tax policy has been disastrous—to the nation, to President Bush, and to the Republican Party. Time to go back to Wall Street.

C BLITZ: It is hard to think of anything especially useful that Secretary Brady has done in fiscal policy, the savings and loan crisis, or international economic relations. The administration needs some stronger people for these subjects.

C- CRANE: Mr. Bush's chief flack for higher taxes possesses a depth of understanding of the issues he addresses that is wholly appropriate for the administration's representative from *Bonfire of the Vanities*. He continues to bash the true free-marketeers from Chicago on behalf of his blue-blooded pals on Wall Street. Brady also will be leading the charge to increase U.S. contributions to the nefarious World Bank and International Monetary Fund. His refusal to cite federal deposit insurance as the chief culprit in the savings and loan debacle puts him at odds with every think tank in town.

Treasury should be in the forefront of efforts to demonstrate the need for tax cuts. Instead, Brady has caved in to the Bush/*Washington Post* obsession with the deficit and signed off on the naive (if not downright stupid) view that higher taxes will reduce the deficit rather than simply increase spending.

Nevertheless, key members of Brady's staff have recently convinced him to propose a sweeping repeal of Depression-era banking regulations, which gains the Secretary a good grade by Bush cabinet standards.

D PINES: Brady must share major blame for the budget catastrophe. Ostensibly as the administration's chief officer for economic matters and as George Bush's great personal friend, he could have forced the president at least to confront the facts, privately confirmed by just about every Treasury official, that the Democratic budget deal promoted by Darman and Sununu not only raises taxes, but also spends every new tax dollar on new programs, leaving nothing for deficit reduction. He also early should have proposed a program of tax cuts to head off or shorten the impending recession and to reduce the tax code's penalties on savings and investment. Curiously, he also backs a tax on stock transactions, a measure designed to drive stock trading to London, Frankfurt, and Tokyo. What prevents Brady from flunking altogether is Treasury's good work on the U.S.–Mexico free trade area talks.

Secretary of Commerce

Robert A. Mosbacher

C BLITZ: He is more visible than some of his predecessors, but so what? This is a department whose secretary should be pushing for ways to cut back programs, and exploring how to make radical budget cuts work. On the plus side, it is good that we are not hearing much of Secretary Mosbacher's national industrial policy views any more.

D CRANE: Mosbacher has for the most part avoided the chronic tendency of his department to promote national industrial policies under a variety of innovative euphemisms. His recent trip to Moscow with CEOs of major corporations, however, demonstrates the dangers inherent in having a Department of Commerce. Businessmen should strike their own deals without subsidies, guarantees, or diplomatic arrangements promised by the secretary and underwritten by the American taxpayer.

B- PINES: Demonstrates steady improvement. If he accomplishes nothing else, Mosbacher will warrant history's praise for his advocacy of a U.S.–Mexico free trade area agreement and for his travels throughout the U.S. and Mexico campaigning for this. Also earns points for what is believed to have been his opposition to the Darman–Sununu tax-and-spend budget package and for pushing to ease antitrust law restrictions on joint research ventures by American firms, which will allow them to compete with foreign research behemoths. Needs to do much more, however, to design a blueprint for such free-market reforms as further deregulation and free trade, which will bolster America's competitiveness.

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Secretary of Defense

Richard B. Cheney

ANDERSON: A Secretary of Defense has a clear-cut job: just help the president keep our nation safe and secure. In a time of crumbling Berlin Walls and bilateral nuclear disarmament and cries of "peace dividend," Cheney has done a masterful job of keeping our national defenses strong with a real margin of safety. The U.S. military buildup in the Persian Gulf has been remarkably swift and professional. Spending reductions in defense are now inevitable, but they must be done with caution and due diligence. So far Cheney has done this brilliantly.

A- **BLITZ:** Cheney has held on to defense dollars at a time when it has been very important and difficult to do so. He has been effective working with the president in using force (Panama) or displaying force (the Gulf) when necessary. He has maintained a commitment to strategic defense. On the negative side, there is no clear sense yet that Secretary Cheney has thought through what our force structure, deployments, or defense strategy should look like in the long term. But this may come soon enough.

F **CRANE:** Cheney is the biggest disappointment in the Bush cabinet. An intelligent man of integrity who one might have hoped would have challenged the Pentagon's predictable effort to hang on to its $300-billion budget despite the end of the Cold War, he has instead turned into a leading theorist on why we still need it. His support for sending 400,000 troops in harm's way to settle a 3,000-year-old feud is inexcusable. Cheney could have and should have stopped the insanity in the Middle East by resigning from office, rather than support a military intervention unrelated to the national security of the United States.

B **PINES:** Cheney gets high praise for his near-flawless and unprecedented rapid dispatch of the several hundred thousand GIs to the Persian Gulf, for braking Secretary of State Baker's penchant to give Moscow nearly whatever it wants on arms control, and for his public skepticism about the likely success of Gorbachev's policies and the longevity of Gorbachev's reign. He loses points for failing to press for even minimally adequate funding for the Strategic Defense Initiative, for failing to curb the narrow bureaucratic interests of the individual services, and for failing to submit even a rudimentary sketch of how the Pentagon is to be reshaped to confront the post-Cold War threats, which differ considerably from those of the Cold War.

Attorney General

Dick Thornburgh

B **ANDERSON:** After a bit of a wobbly start and some staff problems, Thornburgh seems to be steadily mastering his field. Individual rights are still more widespread and better protected in the United States than in any other country in the world. If Thornburgh continues to show steady improvement he could easily end up this term with an "A."

D **CRANE:** The Justice Department's headlong rush to expand the criminal law into areas that America's judicial tradition has heretofore correctly placed in the civil arena is just one reason to be disappointed with the attorney general. The lust to jail white-collar "criminals" is defended on such lofty jurisprudential principles as knowing sleaze when we see it. A victim of the futile crusade against the illegal drug trade has been the civil liberties guaranteed us in the Constitution.

Under Thornburgh's watch the discredited rationales for antitrust prosecution have also been dusted off. On a more positive note, he has been correct in providing support for Bush's veto of the so-called civil-rights bill.

B **PINES:** After a rough first year, Thornburgh has improved somewhat. Deserves merit badges for recommending good judicial appointments. Made the sound, although politically unpopular, case against the excesses of the Kennedy civil-rights bill. Would earn a solid "A" if he instructed his staff to temper its near-manic enforcement of antitrust laws in ways that seriously damage American competitiveness, and if he were to count to 10 before making silly statements about turning his department loose to prosecute service stations that raise gasoline prices and about America's boardrooms that imply that they are dens of thieves.

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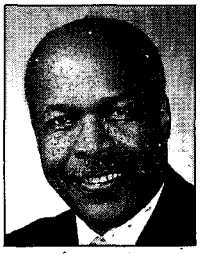
Secretary of Health and Human Services



Louis Sullivan

B+ **BAUER:** While we might have preferred a more proven pro-family advocate for the crucial HHS slot, Secretary Sullivan has become an energetic spokesman for family values, especially as regards the black family. He has given slack to numerous excellent appointees. His donnybrook with Representative Pete Stark was a model of how independent-minded black leaders should react to liberal racism. HHS Secretaries, more perhaps than most cabinet officials (except, possibly, Secretaries of State), face intense pressure from their bureaucracies to turn left as soon as they reach town. Sullivan has not done so; indeed, he has even turned slightly right.

B- **BLITZ:** He has used his position to say several sensible things about health, and he is obviously better than, say, Margaret Heckler. But he has not yet forcefully made the case for across-the-board cost containment in entitlement programs, or even in HHS's non-entitlement programs. HHS is difficult to run. But it is conceivable that someone who knew health care and the Social Security system inside and out could achieve greater results.

D **CRANE:** As the head of the largest department in government, Sullivan has done little to reduce expenses, much less support much-needed privatization of Social Security and Medicare. He presumably signed off on the huge increase in Medicaid expenditures under the new budget agreement.

The intransigent refusal of the Food and Drug Administration to make experimental drugs in addition to AZT available to AIDS patients is both cruel and stupid, and is something Sullivan has the power to change. Sullivan does deserve kudos for taking on socialized medicine proponent Pete Stark in a manner that left Stark looking like a fool.

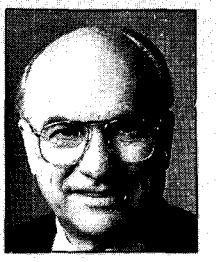
B+ **MORITZ:** Sullivan advocates free enterprise-oriented approaches to health care reform, as he opposes both nationalized health care and intrusive new federal regulations requiring businesses to purchase health insurance for employees. Similarly, Sullivan showed a proper reluctance to expand federal regulations when he opposed federal legislation to outlaw cigarette vending machines. Sullivan has firmly opposed calls for budget expansion in programs without creating bitter enemies for himself and the administration; yet, when his opponents have been unreasonable, Sullivan has conveyed a strong opposing position while maintaining a dignified demeanor.

Sullivan serves well as a prevention advocate, reminding Americans that individuals must be responsible for the consequences of their own actions. Referring to problems including AIDS and premature death in the minority community, Sullivan said, "It has become ever more clear to me that...those problems arise precisely from an erosion of basic values and the collapse of the institutions that teach them, like the family and the community."

Sullivan could improve by pursuing aggressive, free-market game plans on health care and welfare reform, and still has the potential to be a cabinet star.

B+ **PINES:** Getting better all the time, impressing political veterans with his grasp of Washington. With strong help from his Under Secretary and other senior staff, is taking charge of America's biggest domestic federal bureaucracy. Earns points for breaking the recent HHS mold with his talk of individual responsibility in life-style and health care. And when Representative Pete Stark, a California Democrat, took a racist swipe at him, Sullivan slugged back—holding his ground with dignity and effectiveness. Would nail down his "A" by devising a free-market alternative to Ted Kennedy's national health plan.

Secretary of Agriculture



Clayton Yeutter

D **CRANE:** The 1990 farm bill is only marginally better than the anti-market, pro-subsidy 1985 version. Nevertheless, it is clear that Yeutter wanted better. He has been leading the charge to get the Europeans to cut back on their agricultural subsidies, but in doing so has been too willing to impose the specter of trade retaliation. He's an oxymoronic "level-playing-field free-marketeer."

C- **PINES:** While admirably pressing in international negotiations for an end to foreign farm subsidies and for lower barriers to farm imports from America, he pretty much ignored what was happening on the home front. Here he did little to change the dreadful 1990 farm bill, acting as if he were a prisoner of the farm lobby. Disappointing too was his opposition to the sensible cuts in farm subsidies proposed by Representative Richard Armey. His grade would be higher had he merely used his powerful bully pulpit to pitch for an end to American farm subsidies and a freer American farm economy.

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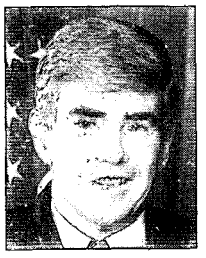
Secretary of Housing and Urban Development



Jack Kemp

A- **ANDERSON:** The best HUD Secretary the United States has ever had. Should get extra credit for loyally serving President Bush while gnashing his teeth privately over inept economic policy moves. Gets a minus because he is in way *under* his head. The job does not fully challenge his powers. No one has ever run for president of the United States using HUD as a political power base, and no one ever will.

A **BAUER:** Kemp's conservative populism and his ideas on empowerment made him the ideal choice for HUD back when he was appointed, and he has slugged away at implementing those views ever since then. My only question (and not only mine) is, could his talents be more effectively used higher up in the administration?

B+ **BLITZ:** He has ably articulated the promise of an improvement in the situation of the poor that is consistent with overall growth in the economy, rather than with redistribution. He has made fully clear the important point that Reagan conservatives believe that growth is good for everybody, not just for the wealthy. But he has not yet put together a package of programs that might bring this off. At the same time, it is hard to think of anybody who would have done a better job streamlining HUD.

D **CRANE:** Kemp gets a "D" for old times' sake. Those who wait breathlessly for him to step down from HUD and rescue the Republican Party from George Bush would do well to read leftist journalist Robert Kuttner's puff piece on Kemp in the June 11 *New Republic*. In it, Kemp dismisses the relevance of Ludwig von Mises and F. A. Hayek (he's "flirted" with their free-market economics in the past, he admits) and points out that in today's world "people are going to demand problem-solving by government." Gushes Kuttner, "Kemp is probably right that the solution to the housing crisis will require not 2 percent of the federal budget, but 5 percent—about $60 billion."

A- **MORITZ:** The cabinet's self-described "bleeding-heart conservative" has had his hands full with a scandal-ridden department, yet Kemp has risen above this to project a vision, and morale is higher at HUD than anyone could reasonably expect. Some have criticized the agency's slow speed in decisionmaking, but critics should take into account that the agency Kemp inherited was a decade behind in management and technology practices, and that Congress has micro-managed parts of the department.

(continued)

Secretary of Transportation

Samuel K. Skinner

C **ANDERSON:** The last thing this country needs is a *national* transportation plan. The states and counties and cities have enough trouble. Perhaps Skinner should take a sabbatical and travel and study—in depth—how well national transportation plans have succeeded in other countries. If he steals a page from the privatization book of some of those East European countries and sells Amtrak, his grade could improve markedly by the end of the term.

C **CRANE:** Skinner has proven he can learn on the job. When free-market types warned against too much government involvement in transportation coming out of his master plan, he took the criticisms to heart and has followed a more market-oriented approach since then. In particular, his opposition to raising fuel economy standards on the grounds they would lead to more deaths on the highway has been a breeze of fresh air in the dank atmosphere of the Bush administration.

Further, he has resisted harebrained schemes to cartelize the airline industry in the wake of deregulation. On the other hand, Skinner has opposed privatization of the air traffic control system and the airports themselves—the answer to the congestion brought about by only partial deregulation of the industry.

B- **PINES:** A full grade-point jump for preventing his department's formulation of a National Transportation Strategy from becoming a blueprint for a transportation sector industrial policy that would strangle the American economy. Instead, personal intervention by him and his top aides rescued the strategy by infusing it with free-market arguments. To earn an "A," he must move beyond rhetoric and devise specific measures for these free-market concepts, for more competition in transportation, and for privatization solutions to the problems of airport congestion and crumbling transportation infrastructure. He also can do much more to alert the public that his policies make him the nation's chief champion of the consumer and of competitiveness.

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(Kemp, continued)

A problem: Free-marketeers who work in government have to walk a fine (perhaps impossibly so) line. It is difficult to do a good job managing programs designed to help those who are not self-reliant without undermining one's advocacy of self-reliance. As long as Kemp chooses to work in government, he should make up for this by being extremely aggressive in promoting free-market principles.

A- PINES: Kemp shows steady and impressive improvement. When he took control of this department from his scandal-scarred predecessor, the ball was deep in his own territory. Since then, he has gained considerable yardage and boosted team morale. He has launched important programs that expand tenant management of public housing and homeownership and he has become the administration's main champion of an empowerment strategy to end the four decades of welfare dependency. Vast travels have taken him deeper into the inner city than any other cabinet official in history, winning enthusiastic black and Hispanic support for him and his free-market, self-help policies. His key dilemma: Will his integrity allow him to remain at a cabinet table with Darman and Sununu, whose tax policies severely penalize blacks, Hispanics, and other working Americans?

Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency

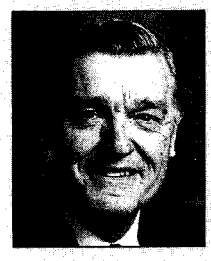
William K. Reilly

F CRANE: Despite a masterful public relations effort to pass himself off as a born-again free-market advocate and to stress his chummy relations with corporate leaders, Reilly remains the determined left-liberal environmentalist who led Nixon's efforts to bring national land-use control to America and replace private property with "social property." He has actively opposed efforts to require the Justice Department to see that federal agency regulations do not constitute takings under the Fifth Amendment. He helped create a National Wetlands Plan that will effectively nationalize all remaining (and very loosely defined) wetlands. And the EPA under Reilly continues to foster public hysteria and misinformation regarding the health risks of synthetic agricultural chemicals such as Alar.

Reilly's leading role in promoting the administration's anti-science, disastrous Clean Air Act makes one wish Dukakis, instead of Bush, had appointed someone to EPA.

D PINES: Reilly offers failed conventional solutions to environmental problems. While his rhetoric gets top grades, with its high-minded incantation of market forces and economic growth, his actions reveal that he pays scant attention to what he says. Example: He took George Bush's generally sound, market-based proposal for a Clean Air Act and distorted it into simply more regulation, imposing more costs on American workers, consumers, and industry. He delayed release of an EPA report that refuted the claim that acid rain causes enormous damage and he fought against the Symms Amendment requiring just compensation to those who lose full use of their property because of EPA action. He gives free rein to local EPA offices to pursue what appear to be vendettas designed to close local industry. His grade would soar were his actions to take their cues from his words.

Secretary of Energy



James D. Watkins

C CRANE: There's something to be said for cabinet members with virtually no visibility. True, he did chastise the oil companies for raising prices when uncertainty about future supplies arose—something one would have thought to be the appropriate response in a market economy. But when the admiral circulated a memo to his department staff suggesting things like more air in their tires as the answer to the Middle East crisis, we were spared the gas lines a more activist Secretary would likely have created through price controls.

C PINES: Watkins merits a passing grade for remaining invisible. The next best thing to abolishing Energy as a cabinet agency is a Secretary who does very little. Watkins must be commended, therefore, for keeping calm and balking at "doing something" during what was a near-panic atmosphere when oil prices soared after Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. He wisely avoided pressing for Carter-style emergency powers, which would have introduced a new generation of Americans to gas lines. He wisely has no illusions of becoming an Energy Czar and has sound ideas about revamping regulation of the nuclear power industry. What could raise his grade is for him to become selectively visible by directing public attention to unreasonable environmentalist regulations that make America dangerously dependent on Middle East and other foreign oil.

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ANDERSON: Expel. **EXPEL** Darman is the *idiot savant* of American politics, perhaps the most intelligent person in the higher reaches of government, a brilliant bookkeeper. A world-class tactician when following the strategic directions of others, he confirmed the correctness of the Peter principle when he was elevated to the number one job. The man who helped Presidents Reagan and Bush achieve the greatest economic expansion in U.S. history calculatingly drew up the blueprint that will probably stop it in its tracks. A non-economist with the political instincts of a Harvard graduate, this fellow is in the wrong class.

BAUER: He's slick with numbers, but has no political understanding whatsoever. He has led the administration into tax increases that were neither good policy nor good politics. In a more honorable era, any official who had done to his administration what Darman has done to this one would resign.

Director of the Office of Management and Budget

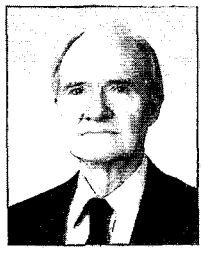
Richard Darman

CBLITZ: On some issues—fighting misplaced restraints on trade, for example—Darman has been useful and sensible. But at the end of the day, even apart from the political damage, he did not perform his job very well. He controlled the budget operation for the administration, and the results were not good. He had a sequestration option, which he failed to use even as a credible threat. Along with many cabinet members, he seems to have forgotten that our goal must be real reductions in spending and bureaucracy, not clever ploys or managing the status quo. At a time when many state governments are making substantial spending cuts, what genuine cuts has the Bush administration achieved?

CRANE: To gain the accolade "brilliant" from the establishment political media, it is a prerequisite that one not have a single principled bone in one's body. Such rigidities tend to inhibit the flexibility required to accommodate each and every special interest inside the Beltway. His recent attack on Jim Pinkerton, whose "new paradigm" is by far the most intelligent policy approach floating around the administration, is further evidence that Darman shies away from ideas like a vampire from the cross.

With a budget containing not tens, but hundreds, of billions of dollars just begging to be cut, Darman managed to set the federal government on a course that will actually increase the rate of spending over

National Security Advisor



Brent Scowcroft

ANDERSON: You don't hear much from Scowcroft, which is exactly how it should be for someone in this powerful, sensitive job. Both he and his deputy Bob Gates can only be graded by the results of foreign policy and defense policy. They must be doing something right.

CBLITZ: It is hard to imagine any difference if he were not there. Since President Bush (with Secretary Baker) makes most of his own tactical foreign policy decisions, his national security advisor might be filling the vacuum in the administration's strategic thinking. What do we wish our relations with Japan or Mexico or Germany to look like 10 years from now? To what degree should American foreign policy be committed to the spread of representative democracy and free markets? Scowcroft, however, does not seem to be addressing these questions.

CMORITZ: Scowcroft has more influence than his reputation suggests, especially on arms control, the Soviet Union, and Europe. Unfortunately, his influence hasn't been good. Knowing that Soviets have over 300 mobile nuclear missiles (and continue their production) and the U.S. has zero, one would expect a national security advisor to support either the MX or SDI. Scowcroft supports neither; even going so far as to urge the president to sign a defense bill with SDI levels so low they gut the program. Events like those in the Persian Gulf demonstrate the need for SDI; Scowcroft should become a stronger advocate.

BPINES: The National Security Council staff, if not Scowcroft himself, have been advocating sound policies in Southeast Asia such as refusing to recognize Vietnam until there is a comprehensive settlement in Cambodia. He gets points too for helping shape the initial forceful response to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. The trouble is that he has been almost invisible on all other policy fronts. Worse, he has failed to organize the NSC well and defers on almost every issue to the Pentagon or State Department. This denies Bush the independent analysis that the NSC was created to provide and often allows policy vacuums to develop. This particularly is the case in the critical area of devising a global American foreign policy for the post-Cold War world. Here, so far, nothing is happening at the NSC.

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Darman, continued

the next five years. Not to be fiscally irresponsible, he also kicked in the largest tax increase in American history. There are over 3,000 domestic programs in the federal government and not one got eliminated in the excruciating budget negotiations.

FPINES: The Milli Vanilli of the Bush White House, he lip syncs what are actually the economic policies of the Carter administration, apparently to halt U.S. economic growth and job expansion and to ignite double-digit inflation and unemployment. In what, by comparison, makes junk bond dealers look honorable, his vaunted budget deal with liberal Democrats inflicts the greatest single-year tax increase on working Americans. He deliberately and repeatedly made false claims that his budget summit compromise will reduce spending and the deficit. He misled members of Congress, his president, the press, and the public about the lessons of the unprecedented economic expansion of the Reagan–Bush administration. And he broke the honor code of loyalty to his president's administration through close fraternization with leaders of the opposition, through bullying and gagging Council of Economic Advisers Chairman Michael Boskin, and attacking senior White House staffers. Maybe Donald Trump has a job for him.

Secretary of the Interior

Manuel Lujan Jr.

DCRANE: Lujan has done a credible, if not overwhelmingly successful, job of preventing the environmental community and his increasingly "greened" agency from swinging the pendulum back to the no-use, no-development public lands policies of Jimmy Carter. Nevertheless, he has not curbed Interior's ever-growing lust for the nation's remaining private lands, has leapt at the opportunity to tie up the Resolution Trust Corporation with environmental concerns over properties being disposed of, and has managed to turn the spotted owl into an anti-capitalist mascot.

Incredibly, Interior has also created a moratorium on any further off-shore leasing for oil exploration and development, thereby locking up enormous amounts of America's energy resources.

CPINES: Barely earns a passing grade for the same reason as last year: he apparently never wanted this job and has no heart for it. Thus he shows little interest in running Interior. As a result, the department fails to make its potentially important contribution to energy and environmental policy debates. He does say, however, some sensible things, pointing out, for example, excessive and senseless provisions of the Endangered Species Act and pushing for economic growth in rural areas. Typically, however, he fails to follow through with program proposals and his good words vanish with no trace.

ABAUER: As our first Drug Czar, he not only achieved more results than one could expect, he also put the drug issue in the moral context in which it belongs.

FCRANE: Bennett has proven himself—at Education and as Drug Czar—to be first and foremost a believer in big government. He intends to force his vision of America down our throats, regardless of the cost to taxpayers or the civil liberties that may get trampled in the process. A worse selection to head the RNC Mr. Bush would have been hard-pressed to come up with.

Director of National Drug Policy

William J. Bennett

APINES: Bennett earned high honors until his mid-term departure. Having taken on the most difficult job in America, he performed spectacularly well by keeping the drug debate focused on user accountability and law enforcement, and by refusing to make foreign governments and "American society" scapegoats for the drug problem. His state-by-state analysis of efforts to fight drugs called attention to those who are dragging their feet, and he won legislative approval for such penalties as suspending driver's permits for any drug offense. He should not be blamed for White House reluctance to push his proposals aggressively on Capitol Hill, nor for White House failure to echo and magnify his sound analysis of and prescription for the drug crisis.

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Sue City

The Case Against the Contingency Fee

Walter Olson

For years the New York City firm of Morris Eisen P.C. ran one of the nation's biggest personal-injury law practices, employing 45 lawyers and handling hundreds of cases at a time. Like all law firms that specialize in injury lawsuits, it worked on contingency—keeping a share of its clients' winnings, if any ("no fee unless successful").

It all came undone in 1990 when a federal grand jury indicted Eisen and seven persons associated with his firm on charges that included bribing witnesses and court personnel, suborning false expert testimony, doctoring photographs, and manufacturing other physical evidence. Among those charged along with Eisen were two lawyers, a former office manager, and four private investigators who worked regularly with his firm.

Federal prosecutor Andrew Maloney detailed the charges. "They produced an eyewitness to two automobile accidents," he said. "The witness was never at either accident and, at the time of one accident, he was serving time on a forgery charge." In another case, where one of Eisen's employees claimed to have tripped at a racetrack parking lot, Maloney said one of the suspects used a pickax to widen a pothole so it could be blamed for the supposed incident. Two of the group were charged with causing a witness to give false testimony in another lawsuit where an injured woman claimed that a bus driver had signaled for her to cross the street into traffic; New York City settled the case for $1 million. Altogether the 19 lawsuits where wrongdoing was alleged had brought in $9 million in awards and settlements, of which the lawyers had pocketed an estimated $3 million in contingency fees, along with some additional sum to cover their reported expenses.

Around the rest of the country a wave of similar scandals was breaking. A front-page series in the *Miami Herald* told how a North Miami legal practice had conspired to manufacture and exaggerate injury claims. Florida prosecutors followed with a 32-count indictment of three lawyers, two doctors, and three associates. A federal indictment charged two New Jersey lawyers and a doctor with 58 counts in an alleged scheme of massive fraud in auto-accident claims.

America's legal profession, it seems, is being cleaned up. Or is it? What may be needed is not just more crackdowns like those underway, but a rethinking of the modern American wisdom on legal ethics.

Temptations for Dishonesty

Lawyers as a profession face unusual temptations to engage in unethical conduct. No one knows better how to skirt or evade the law than someone trained in it, and huge amounts of money can hang on the choices made when no one is looking over a lawyer's shoulder. This can be tempting enough for the ordinary lawyer who guides inexperienced clients through large financial transactions. It can be even more tempting for the trial lawyer who specializes in lawsuits or threats of lawsuits. Litigation is mostly about the violent and chancy redistribution of wealth. It abounds in opportunities for perjury-coaching and witness-tampering, the faking of evidence, and the bribing of court personnel, all for what can be dizzyingly high stakes. It offers many chances for dishonest persons to become rich.

A job that offers enormous rewards for unscrupulousness will attract many unscrupulous people, and corrupt many people of ordinary character. Yet most of the ways to sort out the bad apples are not very promising. Criminal prosecution, disbarment, and other heavy-duty disciplinary measures can help in the few cases where abuses can be brought to light and proved conclusively. In practice, only a few relatively flagrant cases of lawyer misconduct are caught and corrected in this way, mostly embezzlement of client funds and the like. Advance screening of bar applicants for "good character" is a subjective affair that can imperil the merely unpopular applicant along with the shady one; it has fallen largely into disuse. Civil lawsuits against lawyers provide occasional recourse for victimized clients but next to none for victimized opponents.

What is really needed is a reduction in the temptations for dishonesty within the practice of law itself.

Walter Olson *is senior fellow at the Manhattan Institute.* *This article is excerpted from his forthcoming book* The Litigation Explosion: What Happened When America Unleashed the Lawsuit *(Dutton/Truman Talley Books).* © 1991 by Walter K. Olson.

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Ethics in Sports

The ethical rules of many professions share a common underlying principle: if temptations are allowed to get out of hand, many will yield. To put it in raw dollar terms, if under system A people can grab $1,000 by telling a lie, and under system B they can grab $1 million by telling the same lie, more people—not all, but more—will tell the lie under system B. No system could block all chances to profit from lying, cheating, and corner-cutting; that would be hopelessly utopian. Rather, a practical system of ethics tries to fence off the steepest and most slippery slopes. It lowers the rewards for dishonesty not to zero but to a point where most people will resist.

One of the standard ethical rules of professional sports forbids athletes to bet on their games. There are obvious reasons for not letting them bet against their own teams. The reasons for not letting them bet in favor are in the end no less compelling. Some athlete-gamblers would throw their strengths into certain contests at the expense of the season as a whole. More generally, kneeing and below-the-belt gouging of opponents would run wild: badminton would soon get as mean as hockey, and who can think what hockey itself would be like?

Likewise doctors have never been allowed to charge contingency fees—to place, in effect, bets with their patients on the success of their therapies. Under such a system, doctors would dispense with their fees if a patient remained sick. If on the other hand he rallied, they would charge higher than normal fees. And if the patient got well enough to go back to work, doctors might even arrange to take a share of his future earnings.

Why would this be unethical? In part because it would tempt doctors to depart from honesty. Under such a fee arrangement some doctors would portray transient maladies, best treated by doing nothing, as life-threatening to scare patients into promising a whopping contingency. Some would cure an illness with harsh remedies that left the body vulnerable to worse assaults later on. Some would allow patients who were still sick to believe they were cured, perhaps administering feel-good potions toward that end. Falsification of test results, bedside

As other nations recognize, the contingency fee can yoke lawyer and client in an assault on the general public.

charts, and autopsy findings would go on constantly. Even doctors of ordinary integrity would feel their objectivity subtly disoriented, and the truly unscrupulous would find chances to become very rich indeed.

And so the custom arose of paying doctors by the hour, whether their patients recovered miraculously, feebly, or not at all. By achieving a surprise cure a doctor might hope to get valuable word-of-mouth and repeat

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Lawyers are delegated quasi-governmental authority to invoke compulsory process. Ethical rules limit the overuse of these coercive powers.

business. But that is the difference between more and some, not between feast and famine. Many of the subsidiary rules of medical ethics, such as the separation of medicine from pharmacy, follow similar lines. By shielding doctors from a financial interest in drug-dispensing, we avoid clouding their decision whether to prescribe or withhold drugs in borderline cases.

America's Legal Exceptionalism

In virtually every other country, society has deemed that lawyers, like doctors, should be shielded from the temptations of the contingency fee. The English common law, French and German civil law, and Roman law all agree that it is unethical for lawyers to accept such fees. In 1975 British judges strenuously opposed even a closely regulated version of the fee, in which a contingency suit could go forward so long as leading lawyers verified its reasonableness. They explained that lawyers would no longer make their cases "with scrupulous fairness and integrity."

The American exception on contingency fees developed naturally and inevitably from a wider and more profound American exception on legal fees in general, an exception that is central to understanding the problems of our legal system.

America is the only major country that denies to the winner of a lawsuit the right to collect legal fees from the loser. In other countries, the promise of a fee recoupment from the opponent gives lawyers good reason to take on a solidly meritorious case for even a poor client. Oxford's Patrick Atiyah notes that "the reality is that the accident victim with a reasonable case should be able to find a lawyer with equal ease in England and America."

At first much of America tried a not very promising substitute for the contingency fee: volunteer legal service. Lawyers were supposed to make a reasonable effort to handle a poor person's claim for free when it appeared meritorious. When a suit of this sort was a money claim, and it succeeded, the now not-so-penniless client might offer the lawyer a grateful recompense, but was not obliged to do so. The system was based on two-way altruism, first from the lawyer, then from the beneficiary.

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In Britain and most other countries the winner of a lawsuit has the right to collect legal fees from the loser.

Systems that depend too heavily on pure altruism do not tend to chug along forever. Without a legal right to recover fees in case of victory, lawyers did not donate enough time to these *pro bono publico* cases, and some meritorious claims slipped through the cracks. The straightforward solution of shifting fees to the losers of lawsuits was obstinately resisted. So, amid misgivings and reluctance, the contingency fee was admitted state by state; Maine was the last state to legalize it, in 1965.

Restrictions confined the use of the fee to the necessary cases. The arrangement was to be discouraged unless a client was too poor to pay the normal freight. Most important, lawyers could represent only plaintiffs on this basis, and never defendants, either civil or criminal. And although contingencies were permitted in most money claims, they were disallowed in many other kinds of lawsuits, divorces in particular.

A further web of swaddling rules protected lawyers from dealings by which, purposely or not, they might end up obtaining stakes in the cases they pressed. They could not buy up a promissory note to collect at a profit, nor buy businesses or parcels of land to which lawsuits were attached unless their primary aim were to acquire the property rather than the incidental share of its value represented by legal claim. They could not give money to their clients for free for fear of the appearance that they were paying to keep a lawsuit alive (which, as the offense of "maintenance," was punishable at common law by imprisonment). In fact, they were advised not to enter into business dealings with their clients at all to avoid pitfalls of this nature.

The older American legal ethicists emphasized the need for vigilance against the special corrupting dangers of the contingency fee. Lawyers were to recognize that taking a share in the spoils subjected them to a sort of moral vertigo that should be shunned when not necessary and handled with tightrope care when it was. They would have to cultivate a special humility and detachment when they worked on this basis, trying harder than other lawyers to remember that winning wasn't everything, struggling to forget that victory in the case at hand might bring personal riches or that loss might bring a financial blow. In short, the system was asked to run on a new kind of altruism, the self-restraint of lawyers with fortunes at stake.

"My Ads Can Make You Millions"

Just as salesmen paid on commission step forward and make eye contact when the customer walks in the store, so contingency-fee lawyers have a strong incentive to get clients interested in the merchandise. For such reasons the standard American text on legal ethics, by Judge George Sharswood of Pennsylvania, said the fee gave "an undue encouragement to litigation." Street-level views could be much more scathing. By the 1920s one federal prosecutor was calling the fee the "arch tempter to the ambulance chaser" (as well as the fount of "false claims, witness fixing, and perjury").

With their incentive to go for volume, contingency-fee lawyers have long done far more than their share of advertising and solicitation, both lawful and unlawful. "My custom TV ads can make you millions," promises a full-page pitch on page three of the December 1985 *Trial*, the magazine for injury lawyers. "Twenty-seven lawyers have become millionaires while running my custom TV commercials, 9 are multi-millionaires, and 22 are close (net worth between $450,000 and $975,000)," claims independent producer Paul Landauer. "Some started with less than nothing! One borrowed $6,000 to go on the air and took in an off-shore injury case the second week that settled for $3.8 million." Smart lawyers, he explains, know that attracting clients "in bunches and droves" increases the odds of getting a "big one." "I give you an elegant, 100-percent custom, 'dream lawyer' image the TV audience can't wait to call."

Cultivators of Discontent

The initial step of getting potential clients to dial the operators standing by to receive their call is but the first in the encouragement of litigation. That encouragement naturally extends to every stage of the dispute. The true cultivator of discontent does not sow the seeds of grievance and then retire while the seedlings grow or wither as Nature ordains. He waters and fertilizes the tender shoots to a state of garish bloom.

The popular television show *L.A. Law* has made famous the character of divorce lawyer Arnie Becker. In one episode, a woman comes in who is thinking of splitting up with her husband: they haven't been fighting, but they seem to have drifted apart; maybe it's time to work out a parting of the ways. As Arnie drops a word here and a hint there, her mood subtly changes. She begins to feel annoyed at her hubby, then downright aggrieved; by the next commercial she is howling for his scalp on toast.

This style of consciousness-raising or client education can be applied to virtually any legal problem. Someone walks into the office in a far from combative frame of mind, feeling there is something to be said for both sides, not at all in the right mood for litigation services. The

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entrepreneur can artfully lay out the full gravity of the other side's conduct. The client who wants help in rescheduling overdue bills can begin to appreciate how irresponsible the banks were to send him so many credit cards. The frightened tenant behind on the rent can realize, the thought coming as if unbidden, that the landlord's delay in repairing the sink is really little short of depravity.

None of this would have surprised old-time lawyers in the least, and it was one reason for the insistence on detachment and passivity that runs through their writings on the lawyer/client relationship. Yes, lawyers were to apprise clients fully of their rights and options, but it was best done clinically, so as not to inflame any latent feelings of fear, rage, envy, or avarice. If the case did proceed to litigation, the client as "master of his suit" was to provide the impetus not only for the initial filing but for any major escalation of the battle. Given a client of lawful intent, the ideal lawyer did not try to shape even his attitudes, let alone his story.

Client Loses Control

If you hire a contingency-fee lawyer you surely know already about the great advantage of giving him a piece of the action: he gets a powerful incentive to bring in the absolutely biggest cash amount. But the absolutely biggest cash amount may not be what you want.

You may not, for example, be feeling angry enough to fire off every arrow in your quiver of legal rights. Maybe it strikes you as a little rough to sue the nurse as well as the doctor and hospital just to get a few dollars more, or to brand your ex-business partner as a racketeer as part of your action seeking a fairer division of the enterprise property. You may not want to pry into the other side's private life or invite prying into your own. Then, too, litigation can end in many ways. The bitterest marital fallings-out have been known to end in a miraculous reconciliation. (Most states still forbid contingency fees for obtaining divorce decrees because they so clearly give the lawyer a reason to sabotage any such development.) A new management might take over at the workplace where you were fired and offer you a job instead of back-pay settlement. The magazine you sued for libel might print your side of the story. In a University of Iowa study of libel complainants interviewed after their suits were over, by far the majority said they would have been satisfied at least initially with a correction or retraction instead of cash damages.

But, if someone else fronted the money to get you into court, the action is no longer yours alone. You have a new partner in your lawsuit, maybe a senior partner, to whom words of forgiveness butter no parsnips and gestures of mercy pay for no beachfront condos. You will be pushed toward high-ticket strategies, although they may end in hatred or self-reproach.

Timing is a common source of conflict between lawyer and client interests. Most litigants tire of their fights, if not at first, then after a while, and at some point would rather get on with their lives than hold out for a little more. The lawyer with a big war chest has an incentive to make you wait in order to go for the extra money. Every so often the roles are reversed: some clients have complained, and at least one legal-malpractice suit has charged, that lawyers settled too early for a low figure because they needed help with the office cash flow.

Hiring a lawyer on an hourly fee puts you in control of the direction of your affairs, much as a taxi fare gives you wide discretion to name your own destination and hop off where you want. The contingency fee takes you along for someone else's ride, aboard a high-powered machine typically geared to breaking altitude records. With luck, it might be a ride to riches. But it is best not to complain about the steering. And although you may think you have the right to change lawyers in mid-lawsuit if things get too ugly, just try it.

Costs to Third Parties

There is no denying that contingency fees have certain productivity advantages. Paying people only if their efforts culminate in success definitely coaxes more effort out of them. The question is whether the effort is aimed in the right direction. Much of the economy is run on a fee-for-results basis. Farmers get paid for cabbages based on how many edible cabbages they come up with, not how many hours they spend in the cabbage patch. Realtors and travel agents work on straight commission. So, for that matter, do authors who hope to make royalties past the advance on their books: if the product doesn't sell, they may get no recompense for an extra hundred hours of work.

Not all occupations are like cabbage, house, or book selling. Contingency fees tend to be disfavored in professions to whom the interests of others are helplessly entrusted, where misconduct is hard to monitor. Accountants have long been barred from accepting contingency fees ("I'll pay you twice your normal rate if my taxes go down, the bank stays happy, and I survive the next annual meeting without being voted out"); we hope they will stay independent enough to tell their clients

Doctors have never been allowed to charge contingency fees—to place bets with their patients on the success of their therapies.

unwelcome truths. Salesmen are not always paid on commission in part because the hustle factor in salesmanship can be turned in a destructive direction: commissioned salesmen, although they outperform the hourly variety, are also more tempted to use high-pressure sales techniques and manipulative tactics that "make their numbers look good" to the boss.

Contingency fees are particularly frowned on where the costs of abuse fall on third parties who are not taking part voluntarily. Giving traffic cops contingency fees by

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hinging their bonuses on how many tickets they write arouses widespread anger because it so obviously tempts the officer to be unfair to the motorist. The same is true of giving tax collectors contingency fees by hinging their bonuses on how many deductions they disallow or how many assets they seize. Giving soldiers contingency fees for successful attacks, by letting them loot the towns they capture, was long favored as a way of encouraging warlike zeal, but came under gradual ethical control as civilization progressed; we now give out medals and ribbons instead of the contents of civilian homes.

Dangers for Society

Giving lawyers contingency fees encourages similar abuses of both the client and the public. In the classic underworld injury racket, the operator, after pocketing the defendant's tender of settlement, gives the accident victim whatever pocket change it is thought should satisfy him, or just dumps him back on the street with no money at all. (Any back talk from the victim and his original accident will seem minor in relation to the troubles that await him.) Most clients of today's litigation industry fortunately do not get treated that badly. But many are quite surprised to discover at the end of a suit that the lawyer's claimed "expenses"—copying, filing costs, expert witness fees, and so forth—have somehow ballooned to represent a huge share of the settlement on top of the contingency fee itself. Some naive souls never find out how much the defendant paid to settle, but take the lawyer's word for it.

But the dangers of the contingency fee go beyond the exploitation of clients. After all, alert clients can be on guard against being exploited by their own lawyers; as the abuses are more widely publicized, more may learn to avoid the lawyers who get too greedy in bill reckonings. The real problem with the contingency fee derives not so much from the conflicts it creates between the interests of lawyer and client, as from the even more dangerous conflicts it creates between their interests and everyone else's.

The designated opponents are far from the only ones victimized by wrongful or overzealous litigation.

In truth, many clients are delighted to find a lawyer who is much more ruthlessly committed to winning than the hourly-fee lawyer who represents their opponent. They seek the operator who knows how to turn a worthless or low-value claim into a cash bonanza even if he keeps most of the extra money for himself. If they are made to cooperate in truth-shading or worse, they are not bothered. Some are only too glad to think up new embellishments of their own.

The case against the contingency fee has always rested on the danger it poses not to the one who pays it, but to the opponent and more widely to justice itself. As other nations recognize, it can yoke lawyer and client in a perfectly harmonious and efficient assault on the general public. The designated opponents are far from the only ones victimized by wrongful or overzealous litigation. Every lawsuit sweeps in third parties who are forced to expend time, energy, and money without compensation, and surrender their privacy by answering under oath the probing questions of a hostile lawyer. The cost to taxpayers of running the system are far from trivial; more broadly, lawsuits tend to paralyze productive initiative by keeping rights in a state of suspense. We all pay for needless litigation.

Enthusiastic First Resort

The most common justification for the contingency fee is that it provides the "key to the courthouse" for people of modest means. But injury lawyers tend to oppose the method all other countries use to provide that key: an hourly fee paid by the losing opponent. And it turns out that they happily charge contingency fees to middle- and upper-income clients who could easily afford to pay on an hourly basis.

In fact, mysteriously, the contingency fee has become the *only* way most clients can get a lawyer for injury cases, even if they would rather pay an hourly fee. Some clients suspect that a phone call or two from a lawyer, or a letter on his stationery, may be all they need to get a satisfactory resolution of their problem. They might feel that giving their lawyer a third of the amount won in such a case would be an undeserved windfall. But they are out of luck. A report from the Federal Trade Commission showed that 97 percent of lawyers took injury cases only on contingency, refusing to consider hourly rates, however generous. Lawyers seem to have come to the conclusion that a good injury case is a plum and, damn it, they have a right to a share, as befits a player. They are also loath to undercut the "going rate" fee percentage, even when success in a case seems virtually assured. In some of the rougher towns like Detroit and Kansas City the going rates over the years have been reported to run at 40 and even 50 percent.

As lawyers have discovered how very profitable this kind of practice can be, more of them have gotten over their scruples. The contingency fee is coming to be seen as the basis of an industry boldly and openly run for profit, as an enthusiastic first resort for the general case rather than a troubled last resort for the special. And in a trend that is full of implications for the future, the fee is spreading to litigation over employment matters, child support, will contests, copyrights, taxes, and, perhaps most ominously, divorces.

In Texas, where the contingency-fee industry is unusually well developed, it is having a profound effect on commercial litigation. Texas lawyer John O'Quinn may represent a one-man wave of the future. His full-page Yellow Pages ad, as quoted in a *Wall Street Journal* report, says he is dedicated to "helping injured people obtain cash damages" and promises an "attorney on call 24 hours a day." State bar officials have accused him of using

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runners to acquire injury cases. What makes O'Quinn an interesting and apparently a very, very rich man is that he also applies his personal injury case methods—appealing to populist resentment—to otherwise routine disputes between businesses, with astonishing success. His most startling victory came in 1988 when a jury awarded $600 million to one of his clients, an Ohio natural-gas producer, in a contract dispute with the giant Tenneco Corporation.

A Professional's Obligations

For centuries the practices of law, medicine, accounting, pharmacy, and other professions have been seen as fundamentally different from those of, say, agriculture, metalworking, and clothes-making, not because the former pursuits are more important or difficult, but because they pose special dangers of abuse and unethical conduct. Professionals face distinctive ethical responsibilities that would be unnecessary and indeed wrongheaded to impose on other persons. These responsibilities have gradually crystallized in the form of long-evolved codes of professional ethics.

A typical tenet of these codes is that a professional practice should not be run purely "as a business." Ethical codes commonly require members to charge per-hour fees rather than contingency fees based on a client's satisfaction or success. Even more common are rules restricting the gung-ho "chasing" of business through advertising and more direct promotional methods.

Such rules plainly curb competition, and many free-market supporters have denounced them as advancing a profession's collective interest at the expense of society's. Critics have cheered over the last 15 years as professions have been forced to relax or abandon their former ethical rules, under pressure from antitrust suits and adverse court decisions.

The case *against* untrammeled professional competition is seldom heard at length these days, but should not be dismissed lightly. It proceeds from the observation that competition tends to stimulate output of a service and tailor it more closely to what customers want. These normally fine results can be problematic in a professional context.

Consider first the stimulation of output. Overselling—the hustling of customers to buy things they would probably do better without—is perhaps a venial offense in the selling of home freezers and encyclopedias, but somewhat more ominous when applied to amphetamine pills and divorces. Auto salesmen are free to encourage impulse buying of sports cars, but surgeons may have a duty to discourage unnecessary surgery.

Perhaps, lest we fall into paternalism, it is best to recognize the client's right to be self-destructive. Trouble is, many dubious professional services harm someone other than the one who pays for them. A great deal of medicine is practiced on infants or on feeble or unconscious persons at the (perhaps misguided) behest of family members and others. There is likewise a steady market for faked medical reports, forged prescriptions, and undeserved audit options, all of which facilitate

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Most states forbid contingency fees for divorces lest they encourage lawyers to sabotage reconciliation.

fraud aimed at third parties. The unethical doctor or accountant, far from being shunned by clients, may be in hot demand—which may be one reason to shield both professions from too strong a financial incentive to give clients what pleases them.

Of course the deliberate insulation of producers from consumer sovereignty is a dangerous thing. It seems likely that many of the old bans—on price advertising by druggists and opticians, for example—were of little importance in curbing abuse and did badly undercut market efficiency. We may also wish on libertarian grounds to uphold an individual's right to offer services to consenting clients even if the consequence is to expose third parties to hard-to-detect abuse. But however strong the case may be for deregulating the practice of medicine and accounting—while, one hopes, allowing outraged colleagues to shun the maverick, which our antitrust laws currently forbid them to do—there is no case at all for extending the principle to the practice of law.

Lawyers are delegated certain quasi-governmental powers to invoke compulsory process. In particular, they can initiate lawsuits that impose huge unrecompensed costs on what frequently turn out to be innocent opponents. As we know from the case of pollution, the opportunity to impose costs on other people is likely to be overused unless it is regulated or priced in some way. In no way does it violate individual rights to demand of those who seek to wield this coercive power that they submit in exchange to certain rules to prevent its overuse.

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System Overload

The Size of Our Government Is Unsafe for Democracy

Brink Lindsey

American democracy has seen better days. Across the political spectrum there is a growing sense that our system has fallen into corruption—not just humdrum venality (although there is plenty of that), but rather a sweeping and pervasive institutional degradation.

The recently concluded budget fiasco is symptomatic. The episode played like a comedy of errors: the "summit" deal blindsided by public outrage and trashed by the congressional rank-and-file; the government wavering in and out of mandated shut-down; and in the end, the final package passed in the dead of night, its details unknown to those who voted on it. The overall picture is of a government both out of touch and out of control.

Numerous ills underlying democracy's malaise have been identified. The malignant influence of political action committees, the unfair advantages that incumbents enjoy over challengers, the vacuousness of campaigns dominated by media consultants, and the paralysis of divided government have all received substantial attention.

Beyond the more visible troubles with American self-government, though, there is a deeper and more basic problem. Simply put, the size and complexity of contemporary government have made it impossible for democracy to function properly. No matter what "good government" reforms are instituted, there remains a deep-seated and ineradicable conflict between the realities of big government and the aspirations of self-government.

Limited Attention Span

Democracy means the rule of the people—government by consent of the governed. In a representative democracy such as our own, popular control may be exercised in two basic ways. First, the people may guide policy directly through public opinion, which when focused and firm on a particular issue is always influential and usually irresistible. Second, the public rules vicariously through its elected representatives; it is presumed that such officials, coming from the people and accountable to them, will act in the public's interest even on those matters where public opinion is silent or nebulous.

Both of these aspects of democratic control are now visibly slipping under the bloated bulk of the federal government's innumerable activities and responsibilities. The problem is system overload: there is too much government for the public and its representatives even to comprehend, much less control.

The effectiveness of democratic control faces one inescapable limitation—the number of issues that can be squeezed into the public agenda at any one time. For ordinary citizens in normal times, political issues will inevitably assume a low priority. The demands of job and family, the diversions of recreation, and the press of strictly local concerns impose rather harsh limits on the range of national issues that can engage the public's interest and consideration. Accordingly, the larger the scope of government's responsibilities, and the more complex its programs and policies, the greater is the likelihood that vast areas of government will operate wholly outside public scrutiny or even cognizance.

This threat to democracy is not new; it was clear to our Founders that an overextended government is incompatible with popular control. As Publius observed in the *Federalist Papers:*

> It will be of little avail to the people that the laws are made by men of their own choice if the laws be so voluminous that they cannot be read, or so incoherent that they cannot be understood; if they be repealed or revised before they are promulgated, or undergo such incessant changes that no man, who knows what the law is today, can guess what it will be tomorrow.

The Federal Iceberg

This is exactly the situation in America today. Notwithstanding the considerable accomplishments of the Reagan Revolution, big government remains an unshakable basic premise of American political life. Federal

Brink Lindsey *is a trade attorney in the Washington office of Willkie Farr & Gallagher.*

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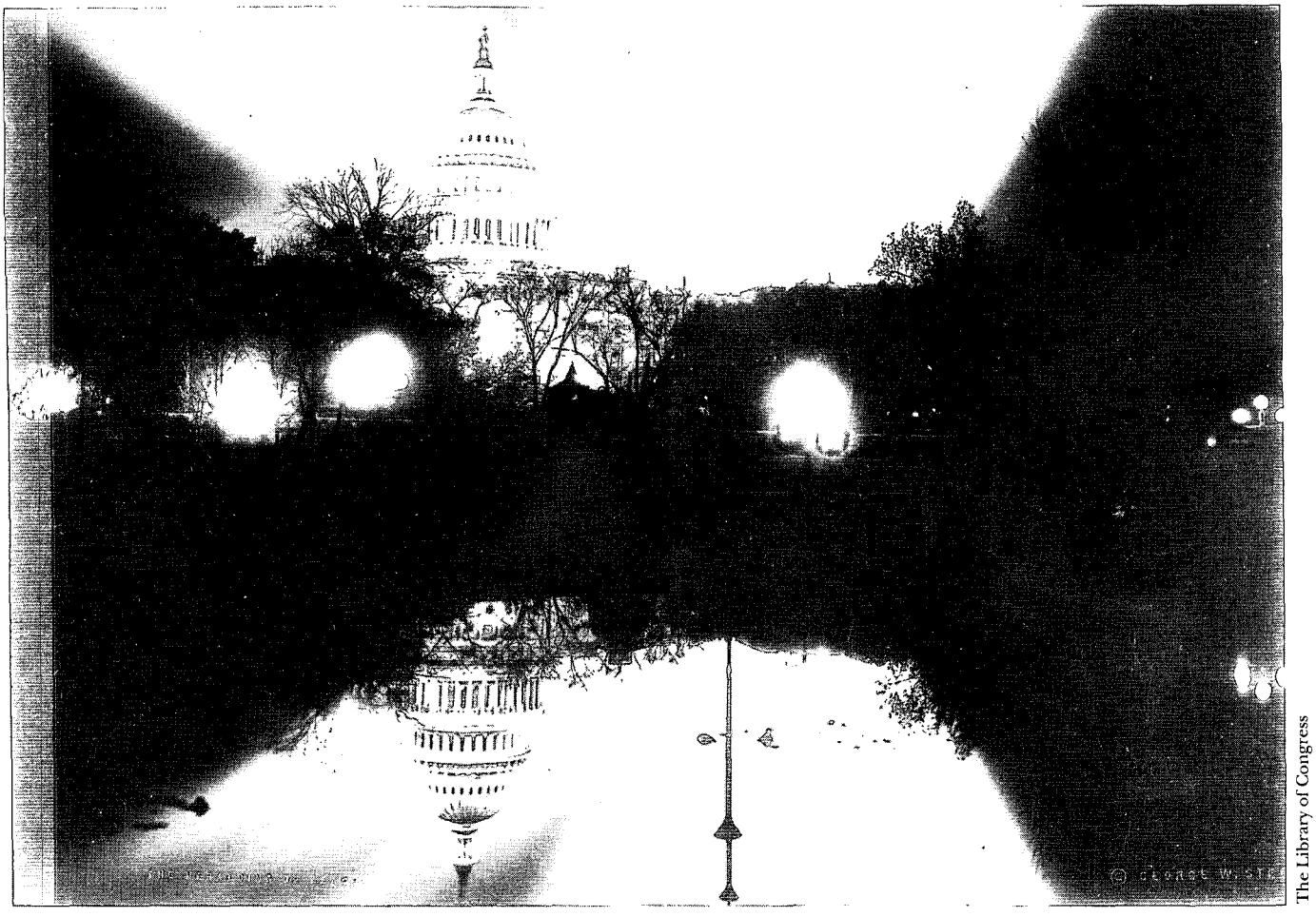

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"It will be of little avail to the people that the laws are made by men of their own choice if the laws be so voluminous that they cannot be read, or so incoherent that they cannot be understood."—*Federalist Papers*

funding and regulation have become inextricably connected with every aspect of social existence, and the scope of federal responsibility for social problems is virtually without limit.

Consider, for example, this random sampling of the forgotten and the never-heard-of: the Export–Import Bank, which provides subsidized loans and loan guarantees for U.S. exporters; the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, which, among other things, sets rates for natural gas pipelines; the Delaney Amendment, which prohibits addition of a substance to food if any dose of that substance has ever been found to produce cancer in lab animals; the Job Training Partnership Act, which funds training of "disadvantaged" and "dislocated" workers; and the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, which insures pension plans in case employers default on their obligations. These programs and policies, and hundreds of others like them, exist in the large and growing blind spot of American democracy, their fate determined not by the broad electorate, but by "experts" and "insiders."

Under these conditions, it is flatly impossible for the larger public to keep track of anything but a fraction of the nation's ongoing business. Everything else is out of sight and out of mind—the great body of the iceberg, submerged and invisible.

Even when there is general public interest in some issue, there may still be a lack of real democratic influence on the formulation and maintenance of policy. For instance, Americans in recent years have grown increasingly concerned about protecting and preserving the environment. A number of legislative initiatives have been aided by this perceived shift in national mood, among them the recently enacted Clean Air Act amendments bill. The actual content of the Clean Air bill, though, has received scant attention in our public debate and is almost certainly a complete mystery to most Americans. Will its cost to the economy, estimated to run $30 billion, be justified by the resulting gains in air quality? Or are the new controls unduly onerous and unlikely to produce significant benefits? These questions have not been put to the American people.

Plebiscitary Democracy

The promise of government by consent of the governed is fulfilled only where there is *informed* consent by the public for actions taken on its behalf. With the present hypertrophy of regulations and spending programs and accompanying bureaucracy, informed consent has become impossible. And as the force of public opinion loses its relevance, policymaking is disproportionately influenced by parochial interests whose alignment with the common welfare is haphazard at best. Publius identified the problem over 200 years ago:

> Another effect of public instability is the unreasonable advantage it gives to the sagacious, the enterprising, and the moneyed few over the in-

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dustrious and uninformed mass of the people. Every new regulation...presents a new harvest to those who watch the change, and can trace its consequences; a harvest, reared not by themselves, but by the toils and cares of the great body of their fellow-citizens. This is a state of things in which it may be said with some truth that laws are made for the *few*, not for the *many*.

Public control over government will increase only if there is significantly less government to control. The people's representatives remain accountable in the sense that they must regularly run for reelection. On a day-to-day basis, however, they are unconstrained by public opinion on the great preponderance of the issues with which they deal. This is a condition known as plebiscitary democracy: an all-powerful centralized state combined with democratic trappings. Alexis de Tocqueville, in his magisterial analysis of American democracy, derided this attenuated and debased form of self-government:

The deliberative function of Congress in the latest budget act was little more than a sham.

> Their imagination conceives a government which is unitary, protective, and all-powerful, but elected by the people. Centralization is combined with the sovereignty of the people. That gives them a chance to relax. They console themselves for being under schoolmasters by thinking that they have chosen them themselves.

It was evident to Tocqueville that representative democracy thrives only within the framework of limited government:

> It is really difficult to imagine how people who have entirely given up managing their own affairs could make a wise choice of those who are to do that for them. One should never expect a liberal, energetic, and wise government to originate in the votes of a people of servants.

Legislators in a Fog

Under present circumstances even plebiscitary democracy is overwhelmed by the size of government. The culprit is the physical inability of our elected officials to keep up with the unruly sprawl of federal programs and responsibilities.

Congress, the nation's preeminent democratic body, is widely regarded as an institution in crisis. Most certainly Congress suffers from many ills, but one fundamental problem is that 535 human beings cannot possibly master the details of all the matters that come before them. This has nothing to do with lack of conscientiousness; it has to do with the limited number of hours in the day. Measures pass into law whose relevance, meaning, and even existence are known only to a few legislators at best. Accordingly, the linkage between policymaking and popular control is becoming more and more tenuous.

Contemporary legislation is both sweeping and comprehensive in the scope of its concerns, and narrow and particularistic in the level of detail at which these concerns are addressed. The legislative process may begin with some general, even simple idea, but inevitably it descends into a maze of complexities: definitions of terms, attempts to settle ambiguities and anticipate loopholes, exceptions made for special circumstances, assignment of administrative responsibilities, establishment of proper procedures, and so forth. At the same time, the legislation is shaped—or rather distorted—by a steady bombardment of interest-group lobbying designed to secure favorable treatment for this or that narrow constituency. The end result, the bill ultimately enacted, is an ungainly agglomeration of provisions, some of general concern, others technical and obscure, still others tailored to suit the special circumstances of some narrow interest.

The rank-and-file lawmaker, faced with a piece of pending legislation, does not have the expertise to evaluate its technical intricacies, nor is he privy to the back-room deals that larded the bill with special-interest provisions. He may be well versed on some narrow issue dear to an important constituent or contributor; otherwise, he is unlikely to know anything but the general outlines of the major issues involved. He may not even know that much.

With legislators often in a fog about what they're voting on, Congress's status as a deliberative assembly is severely compromised. For a major bill, the time allotted for floor debate would be consumed many times over just reviewing, section by section, what the legislation is proposing, not to mention arguing its merits. In 1988 alone, the legislation enacted by Congress—not just considered, but actually passed and signed—came to a total of 4,839 pages. And those are pages not of ordinary English, but of twisting, circuitous, cross-referenced legalese. Furthermore, bills are often passed in the frantic final push at the end of a congressional session, the necessary votes accumulated through a slew of last-minute compromises. Inevitably, things will slip through without any discussion at all—straight from the back rooms to the statute books without any public airing.

24-Pound Monster

The spectacle of last fall's budget agreement provides a telling illustration of how Congress now operates. In an attempt to avoid the quagmire of the congressional appropriations committees, the administration and House and Senate leaders bypassed normal legislative procedures in favor of a budget "summit." The strategy

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failed miserably: after months of posturing, maneuvering, and just plain stalling, the summiteers waited until the last day of the fiscal year to agree on a "deficit reduction" plan, which was then summarily scuttled as soon as it reached the full Congress. In the tragicomic weeks that followed, the government hovered on the edge of insolvency while legislators worked feverishly to put together a new package.

Finally, after all-night marathon sessions and only a few days before elections, Congress managed to pass a budget agreement. Copies of the 10-inch thick, 24-pound monster were few and hard to find; people were voting on language they had never even seen. The core of the deal—141 pages of new "spending restraint" mechanisms—had been finalized in negotiations with the administration only hours before being put to a vote. The deliberative function of Congress was little more than a sham.

Unelected Representatives

This overload situation places the power in the hands of people other than elected representatives—in particular, congressional staff members and pressure-group lobbyists. The growth in congressional staff reflects the general expansion of the federal government: the total number of staff jumped from 11,500 in 1973 to 32,000 in 1990. Among other things, staff members have front-line responsibility for drafting and revising legislative proposals; they also prepare the committee reports that give the official explanation of what legislation means. They are the masters of the details their elected bosses don't have time for; they are the true policy experts. They are also unelected and unaccountable.

At times it appears that legislators are simply puppets being manipulated by their staffs. Staff members brief their senator or congressman on what is going on in committee hearings, and provide his talking points and the questions he will ask; they prepare him for meetings with other members, constituents, contributors, and lobbyists; they write his speeches and his op-ed articles; they whisper deferentially in his ear when he says the wrong thing; they negotiate with other staffers on his behalf; and on particularly rushed occasions, they even tell him how to vote.

Farming Out to Lobbyists

Even the staff cannot keep up with the demands of contemporary government. Consequently, much of the work of legislating is farmed out to private-sector lawyers and lobbyists. Working closely with the staff, these private contractors draft legislative provisions, prepare talking points and position papers on specific issues, draft committee report language, and even write what the congressman or senator will say during floor debate. In short, they do exactly what legislators and their staffs do—except that they do it on behalf of paying clients, and they are paid to advance those clients' interests without any regard to the larger public good.

The control that staff members and lobbyists exert over committee reports and what is said in floor debates is particularly insidious. These items, known as "legislative history," are the records that courts turn to as evidence of "congressional intent." They provide detailed explanations of a statute's provisions, and even give concrete examples of what the law actually entails in specific circumstances. Judicial interpretations of statutory provisions frequently turn on what is contained in the legislative history. Even when the meaning of a statute is not litigated, lawyers consult legislative history to advise clients on how the law should be observed.

No matter what reforms are instituted, there remains an ineradicable conflict between big government and self-government.

This canned legislative history is seldom read by congressmen and senators, and it is never debated or voted on; nonetheless, it can become the effective law of the land. From the lobbyist's perspective, inserting favorable language in the legislative history is frequently the perfect vehicle for advancing a client's interests; getting a provision in the actual bill is much more difficult, and the attempt to do so could attract unwanted attention to the client's situation.

17 Feet of Regulations

This *sub rosa* transfer of power, though, is minor compared to what has happened publicly and openly—namely, the massive shift of policymaking responsibility from the legislative to the executive branch that has taken place over the past few decades. From the Agriculture Department to the Veterans Administration, cabinet departments and administrative agencies have been delegated broad authority to fill in the blanks of legislation with their own regulations. These regulations are substantively indistinguishable from statutory law; their content on the whole may be more detailed and specific than legislation, but there are certainly statutory provisions that are as narrow and technical as any regulation. It is on the procedural level that the two are chiefly distinguishable: legislation is voted on by the people's chosen representatives, and regulations are not.

While it is impossible to measure the degree to which legislative power now rests with the federal agencies, one indicator is the size of the Code of Federal Regulations, the official compendium of all formally promulgated regulations. Its nearly 200 volumes form a stack 17 feet high—over 100,000 pages in all.

As elected officials lose control over policymaking and all its mind-boggling complexities, the focus of the Congress is shifting away from legislation and toward more tangible and comprehensible pursuits. The new center of congressional attention is "constituent services"—interceding with the federal bureaucracy on behalf of

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voters and contributors. This can be as innocuous as helping the proverbial little old lady get her Social Security check, and as sinister as running interference for Charles Keating. In any event, this kind of casework has become the bread and butter of congressional offices. For example, the Pentagon is flooded with over 100,000 written inquiries from Capitol Hill a year—not to mention 2,500 phone calls every business day. And in a recent poll of House administrative assistants (representatives' chiefs of staff), 56 percent identified constituent services as the single most important factor behind their boss's political success, as opposed to only 11 percent who considered their congressman's legislative record to be most important.

As general policymaking becomes too complex, Congress is switching to "constituent services," which are easier to understand.

The basic character of Congress is changing from a body of lawmakers to a group of ombudsmen. Representative government is quite simply disintegrating, as general policymaking gives way to the much more comprehensible and manageable task of doing favors for specific constituents.

A Few Well-Defined Tasks

For democracy to be redeemed from its present corruption, a massive rollback in government is needed. The present political culture, unconstrained by any limiting principles and addicted to federal "solutions" to every conceivable problem, must be abandoned. What is needed instead is government that is limited to a few well-defined tasks, tasks whose connections to the general welfare are matters of broad-based consensus. Within this delimited public sphere, effective popular control can again become a reality. With so much less to oversee, the electorate's attention would be sharper and more focused, and lawmakers would have the chance to weigh and consider before they vote. Reduced to manageable proportions, its responsibilities clearly drawn, government could actually be made governable again.

Short of such basic change, though, American democracy will continue to deteriorate. Elimination of PACs, reduction of the franking privilege, term limitations—all are welcome, but these and other proposed reforms are at best half-measures. A real solution must address the root of the matter: the irresolvable conflict between democracy and Leviathan.

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Bosom of Abraham

America's Enduring Affection for Israel

Steven R. David

Neither the end of the Cold War nor the involvement of most of the Arab world in the coalition against Iraq diminishes the strategic and moral importance of Israel to the United States. America and Israel enjoy a deep friendship based on shared democratic values and a common commitment to religious freedom. By virtue of this friendship and its military strength, Israel remains the only country in the Middle East with the power and willingness to consistently defend American interests in the region.

There has of course been a growing chorus of voices—from both the right and left—arguing that the United States should end or drastically reduce its support to Israel. And the Bush administration, out of a desire to protect the anti-Iraq coalition, has asked Israel to keep a "low profile" during the Persian Gulf crisis. Should a war with Iraq become necessary, however, America may come to depend on Israeli assistance. Israel's army and air force are among the world's best, and the U.S. may need their help if it becomes bogged down in a lengthy war over Kuwait. Israel also has the best intelligence in the region. In the event of a war in the Persian Gulf, Israeli information about Iraqi capabilities and facilities would be absolutely crucial to U.S. military targeting and planning.

Unique Dependability

If we look beyond the current crisis, Israel is the only state in the Middle East that is not a potential enemy of the United States. The interests of Israel and the United States are not identical, and disputes will arise between the two countries. But it is unthinkable that Israel would ever engage in anti-American terrorism, support countries that threaten the United States, or confront American forces directly, as have so many of America's Arab allies. In terms of fundamental interests—promoting stability in the Middle East, bolstering moderate Arab regimes, and countering terrorism—Israel and the U.S. are now and will remain in essential agreement.

The United States can depend on Israel for two fundamental reasons. First, Israel is not subject to the coups and rebellions that have bedeviled virtually every other Middle Eastern country. Groups that have seized power have often turned against Washington, as has occurred in Egypt (1955), Syria (1955), Iraq (1958), Libya (1969), and Iran (1979). Second, Israel's pro-American orientation is rooted in the democratic values of its society. In no other Middle Eastern state are the roots of pro-American support so deep, widespread, and immutable.

The consistency and durability of Israel's pro-American commitment is especially important in light of the many shifts of allegiance of regimes in the Middle East and in neighboring Third World states. In the early 1970s, Egypt, Somalia, and the Sudan were strongly pro-Soviet, and Ethiopia was the closest friend of the United States in sub-Saharan Africa. Within 10 years, each of these countries had switched superpower patrons. Because the political orientation of these countries is determined by a narrow leadership elite—sometimes by one leader—a change of government or even a change of mind is enough to alter the country's allegiance.

Israeli support for U.S. interests is independent of the vagaries of inter-Arab politics. Even regimes friendly to the United States will go against American interests if there is strong Arab sentiment to do so. Following the 1973 War, Saudi Arabia, one of America's closest allies, embargoed critically needed oil to the United States. More recently, Jordan's King Hussein, responding in part to domestic pressure, has tilted toward Iraq in that country's confrontation with the United States. The Jordanian response demonstrates the fragility of Arab support for the U.S. in the Gulf and increases Washington's concern that the Arab coalition mounted against Iraq will evaporate over time as public resentment of an American presence builds. As critical as Arab backing has been for the American intervention, there is only one Middle Eastern country that Washington knows will not succumb to Saddam Hussein's pressure—Israel.

Israel as a Just Society

As important and reliable as Israel is to the United States strategically, it is the moral ties based on ideologi-

Steven R. David *is associate professor of political science at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore.*

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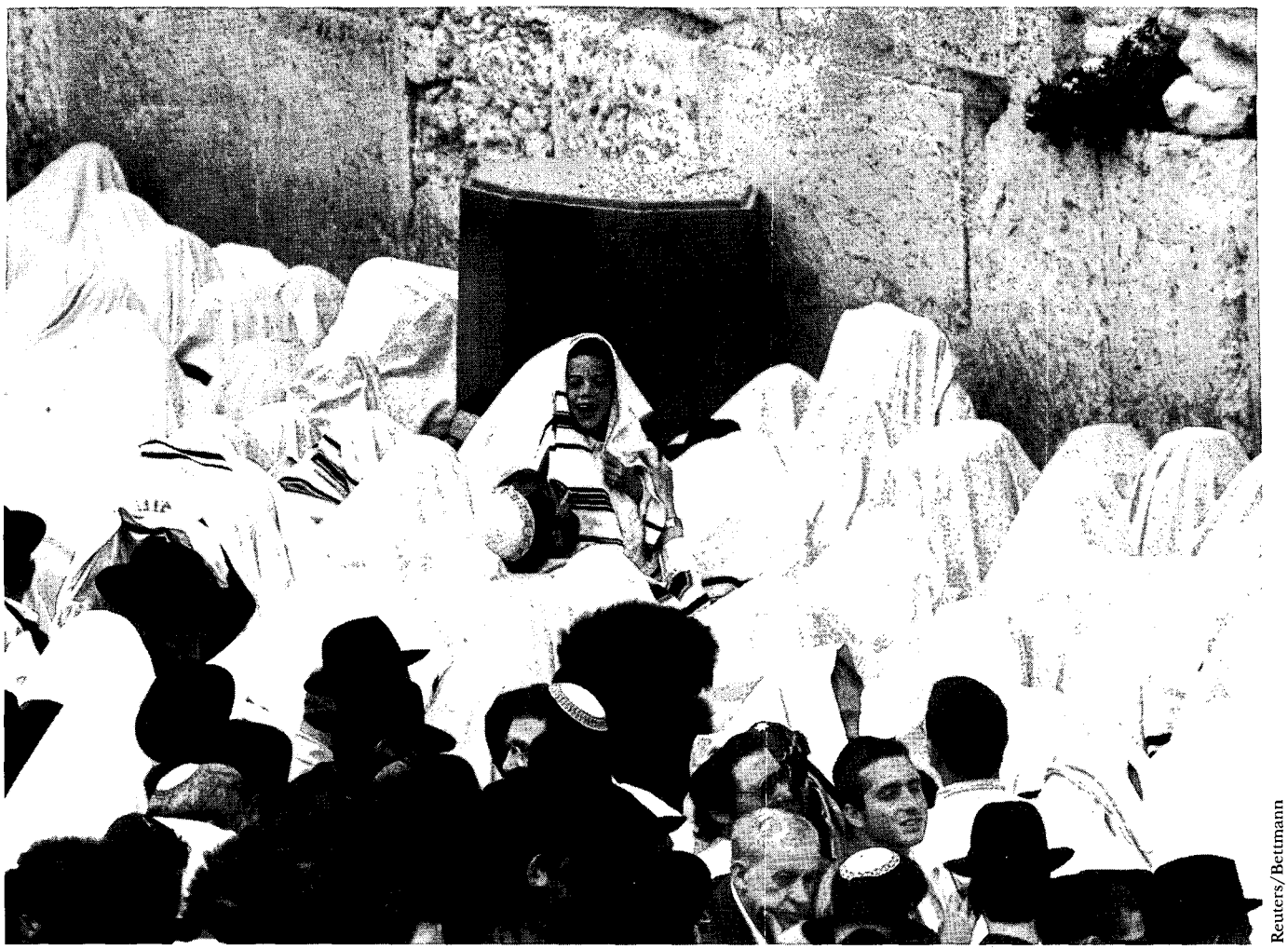

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Jews were unable to worship at their holiest site, the Western Wall, when East Jerusalem was under Jordanian rule. By contrast, Israel assures freedom of worship to all religions.

cal and cultural affinity that best explain and justify the relationship between the two countries.

Even at the height of the Cold War, Americans were never driven by a narrow vision of realpolitik. Nevertheless, when the Soviet Union presented a direct and pressing threat to American security, other interests had to be subordinated to meeting that threat. This often resulted in U.S. support for countries whose values failed to meet the standards of the American people. Now, with the diminishment of the Soviet threat, the United States has the luxury of allowing moral and ideological concerns to play a major role in determining policy. So long as Israel continues to reflect American values to a far greater extent than any other country in the Middle East, close ties between the two countries will be maintained.

Israel is a society informed by a sense of justice that Americans recognize and rightfully admire. It is the only democracy in the Middle East. Israel is the only country in the region that provides (however imperfectly) the basic rights of freedom of speech, press, religion, and emigration that Americans hold so dear. It is a society in which dissent is not only allowed—it is a way of life. It is a society that fosters the formation of human rights commissions that scrutinize every aspect of governmental policy.

None of this is meant to suggest that Israel is without faults. Its continuing occupation of the West Bank and Gaza has resulted in abuses of power that have been well documented. Moreover, as the recent killing of some 17 Palestinians on the Temple Mount, or Haram al-Sharif, has shown, Israeli security forces at times act irresponsibly to suppress unrest.

Without excusing Israeli excesses, however, it must be remembered that the Israeli occupation results from a war of aggression launched by Jordan in 1967. If King Hussein had responded to Israeli requests not to attack during Israel's war with Egypt and Syria, the West Bank would have remained in Arab hands and a Palestinian state could have been established there.

Disputes Among Friends

As for other Israeli transgressions, at least Israel makes an effort to determine when it has behaved wrongly and punishes those responsible. Following the 1982 Sabra and Shatila massacres (in which Christian militiamen slaughtered Palestinians in Lebanese refugee camps under Israeli control) and the recent Temple Mount shootings, it is noteworthy that Israel established commissions of inquiry. These commissions found some Israeli fault in both episodes. Many in the world community complained that Israel did not go far enough in admitting blame and punishing the wrong-doers, but

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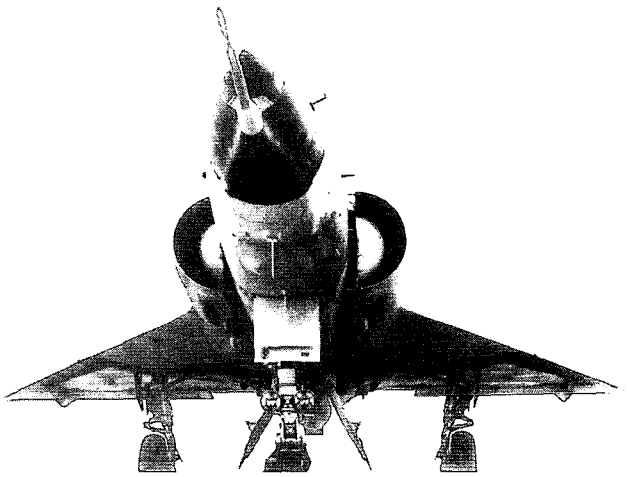
where else in the Middle East would remotely similar assessments of conduct have taken place?

Americans also feel a special affinity with Israel as the birthplace of Judaism and Christianity. While the support of American Jews for Israel is well documented and understandable, far too little attention has been given to American Christian, especially Evangelical Protestant, support of Israel. Some of this support stems from religious beliefs that Israel has a major role in the fulfillment of biblical prophecy. More generally, religious Americans, Christian as well as Jewish, have an emotional attachment to the land of Israel and the cities of Scripture—Nazareth, Beersheba, Jerusalem. Christian backing also arises from a recognition that freedom of access to the holy sites in Israel—Moslem, Christian, and Jewish—has been assured only by the Israeli state. Along with American Jews, these Christians remember that under King Hussein's rule, access to the Western Wall (the holiest place in Judaism) was denied to the Jewish people. Concerns for justice, fears that one prohibition could spawn others, and the recognition that the demise of Israel would end any hopes of Jews, Moslems, and Christians living together peacefully, explain much of this Christian support for Israel.

These common values linking the United States to Israel have helped keep Israeli–American relations strong even when our strategic interests have diverged. Examples of intense disagreements between the U.S. and Israel are many. In the 1956 War the United States condemned Israel's attack on Egypt and forced an Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai. In the early 1970s the United States criticized Israel for not being forthcoming enough in establishing peace negotiations. Following the 1973 War, Henry Kissinger's "shuttle diplomacy" included many bitter exchanges with Israel over its alleged intransigence. In 1982 the United States strongly condemned the Israeli invasion of Lebanon. At present it is clear that the Bush administration would prefer more flexibility from Israel on the issues of the occupied territories and negotiations with the Palestinians. And most recently America has condemned Israel for the killing of the Palestinians on the Temple Mount. What is remarkable is not that we have had so many problems with Israel, but that in spite of these disputes American ties with Israel have remained fundamentally close.

Virtues of a Double Standard

America's admiration for Israel does not prevent it from frequently criticizing Jerusalem, leading many to charge that Washington is employing a double standard. Such complaints miss the point. Of course, the United States holds Israel to a much higher level of accountability than it does Syria, Iraq, or even Saudi Arabia and Egypt. Of course, Israeli transgressions have never approached the massacre of tens of thousands of Syrians by Hafez al-Assad, the killing of hundreds of Moslems during the pilgrimage to Mecca this year, or Saddam Hussein's gassing of thousands of Kurds and ongoing commitment of atrocities against the Kuwaitis. And American criticism of Israel often fails to take into account the neighborhood in which Israel lives and the



Israel Aircraft Industries

Israel is the only state in the Middle East with the power and willingness to defend U.S. interests in the region.

often unsavory actions it must undertake in order to survive.

It is to Israel's benefit, however, that it is subject to tougher U.S. moral standards than its neighbors. Precisely because Israel is seen as morally superior to its neighbors, it receives more American political, economic, and military assistance than they do. The price Israel must pay for this largesse is an intense American scrutiny of its behavior and the need to justify its actions to an extent far greater than its neighbors. It is a high price to pay, but so long as Israel expects U.S. backing, it is a price that must be met.

America's double standard toward Israel thus has a different origin than does the double standard of the world community. The disproportionate censure and vilification that Israel receives from the United Nations and other international organizations is hypocritical, particularly when many of the same countries that seek to delegitimate Israel on moral grounds are themselves among the worst abusers of human rights. This constant and one-sided condemnation of Israel serves only to create a siege mentality that encourages the Israelis to ignore even justified international criticisms. By usually refusing to join this disgraceful bandwagon the United States shows its respect to the international community by holding it to a high standard of fairness.

The central role of shared values in determining the American–Israeli friendship carries an important warning. The most likely way the United States' relationship with Israel will be undermined is not through demonstrating that the Arab states are more important strategically than Israel, or that American support for Israel hurts other, more significant American interests. Rather, if the relationship is undermined it will be through the perception that Israel is no longer committed to the values that drew American support in the first place. Despite the many problems of Israeli society, events have not yet reached that level. But if they should, no demonstration of Israeli strategic worth would be enough to stave off an American abandonment of the Jewish state.

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"Poisoning of the Soul"

New Leaders of Russia and Central Europe Talk About the Evil Empire

Compiled by Kevin Acker

One of the unintended consequences of Bolshevism was the awe-inspiring emergence of a literature of liberty. The works of Solzhenitsyn, Pasternak, Mandelstam, Sakharov, Sharansky, and many others plumbed the depths of totalitarian horror and gave testimony to the power of human reason and the human soul in the face of tyranny. To their great works must now be added the speeches and essays of the new leaders of Russia and what is rightly called again Central Europe—President Vaclav Havel of Czechoslovakia, President-elect Lech Walesa of Poland, Mayors Anatoly Sobchak and Gavriil Popov of Leningrad and Moscow, President Boris Yeltsin of Russia—as well as some of the reformist intellectuals of the Soviet "glasnost" movement, among them Yuri Afanasyev, Alexander Yakovlev, and Tatyana Zaslavskaya. Some of their more eloquent statements about their totalitarian legacy and their dreams of the future have been compiled by Kevin Acker, a senior at Dartmouth College.

"Our Conscience Is Sick"

[Prague Spring] was the first perestroika in the socialist countries, and we crushed and slandered that perestroika. It was collective murder. How many lives and fates have been destroyed, and how much disillusion, anger, and grievance have accumulated over the years toward your own dogmatic, triumphant Stalinists, and toward us, their sponsors and protectors.

Our conscience is sick: the Berlin Wall, the war in Afghanistan, Prague.

—Daniil Granin, Soviet novelist, in open letter to Czechoslovaks, *Moscow News*, November 19, 1989

In the 10 years of that [Afghanistan] war, we not only lost in some degree the prestige that the Soviet Union and its Armed Forces enjoyed after the victorious Great Patriotic War, but also in some degree inflicted terrible pain on the families and friends, our own Soviet people. With hindsight, we are obliged to offer apologies once again and regret that it happened.

—Dmitri Yazov, Soviet Defense Minister, June 1, 1990

The decision to send Soviet troops into Afghanistan merits moral and political condemnation....By this action we set ourselves against the majority of the world community and against the norms of conduct, which should be accepted and observed in international relations.

—Alexander Dzasokhov, reporting the conclusions of the USSR Supreme Soviet Committee on International Affairs, December 24, 1989

Having embarked upon the path of dividing the loot with the [Nazi] predators, Stalin began to speak with the neighboring, especially small, countries in the language of ultimatums and threats. He did not consider it shameful to resort to force. This happened in the argument with Finland. With great power arrogance he brought Bessarabia back within the borders of the union, and restored Soviet power in the Baltic republics. All this deformed Soviet policy and state morality....The whole truth, even the bitterest, must be told some time.

The [Hitler–Stalin] secret protocol of 23 August 1939 reflected precisely the inner essence of Stalinism. This is not the only one, but one of the most dangerous delayed-action mines from the minefield we have inherited, and which we are now trying to clear with such difficulty and complexity. It is necessary to do this. The public mines do not simply fade away on their own.

—Alexander Yakovlev, member of Soviet Politburo, December 23, 1989

"The System Invites Lies"

When people are compelled to look only one way, when they are deprived of information and the possibility to compare things, they stop thinking. Well-informed people, ones who have access to versatile information, inevitably begin to think.

The very system invites lies.

—Oleg Kalugin, former KGB major-general and USSR People's Deputy, *Moscow News*, July 1, 1990

In Afghanistan, I discovered for myself that what appeared in our newspapers was the complete opposite of the truth. We really were fighting. Thousands of

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"The wall that was separating people from freedom has collapsed. And I hope that the nations of the world will never let it be rebuilt."—Lech Walesa

people were killed and injured on both sides. The contrast between what I saw and what I read made me completely distrust our government. It was very difficult to tell our soldiers what we were doing there, whom we were fighting, what was right and what was wrong. Nothing made sense.

—Valery Ryumin, mayor of Ryazan, a Russian provincial capital, *Washington Post*, November 14, 1990

For the past 40 years on this day you have heard my predecessors utter different variations on the same theme, about how our country is prospering, how many more billion tons of steel we have produced, how happy we all are, how much we trust our government, and what beautiful prospects lie ahead of us. I do not think you appointed me to this office for me, of all people, to lie to you.

—Vaclav Havel, president of Czechoslovakia, in New Year's address to nation, January 1, 1990

If you and all others whom we are burying today are without guilt, as we have always known and professed, and as today the immediate inheritors of the power of your executioners also admit that the accusations were fabricated, the witnesses false, the trial conceptional, then those who sent you to the gallows were nothing but murderers....Let their punishment be the contempt of the nation, which has become one for the first time since 1956; let their punishment be that they have lived to see, can see, and hear what is happening today; let their punishment be that their illusions have disappeared and they can guess the judgment of the as yet unwritten history books of future generations will mete out to them.

—Tibor Meray, Hungarian writer (at the reburial of Imre Nagy and his associates), June 16, 1989

Sooner or later the truth will win out on God's earth and deception will be unlocked. Without such moral cleansing the development of civilization is inconceivable.

—Alexander Yakovlev, member of Soviet Politburo, December 23, 1989

"Enormous Human Humiliation"

The Communist type of totalitarian system has left both our nations, Czechs and Slovaks—as it has all the nations of the Soviet Union and the other countries the Soviet Union subjugated in its time—a legacy of countless dead, an infinite spectrum of human suffering, profound economic decline, and above all enormous human humiliation. It has brought us horrors that fortunately you have not known.

—Vaclav Havel, president of Czechoslovakia, before the U.S. Congress, February 21, 1990

The totalitarian system has a special bacterial property. The system is strong not only in its repressive police methods but, more, in the fact that it poisons people's souls and demoralizes them.

— Vaclav Havel, president of Czechoslovakia, *Izvestia*, February 23, 1990

Several German intellectuals and politicians had hard words for the fellow citizens who flung themselves on the West German shops as soon as they could....These could only be the words of people who have forgotten, or never knew, the personal humiliation inflicted by the permanent lack of the most elementary consumer goods: the humiliation of silent and hostile lines, the humiliation inflicted upon you by salespeople who seem angry to see you standing there, the humiliation of always

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having to buy what there is, not what you need. The systematic penury of material goods strikes a blow at the moral dignity of the individual.

—Tzvetan Todorov, Bulgarian author, *New Republic*, June 25, 1990

We are living in a decayed moral environment. We have become morally ill, because we have become accustomed to saying one thing and thinking another. We have learned not to believe in anything, not to have consideration for one another, and only to look after ourselves. Notions such as love, friendship, compassion, humility, and forgiveness have lost their depth and dimension, and for many of us they merely represent some kind of psychological idiosyncracy, or appear to be some kind of stray relic from times past, something rather comical in an era of computers and space rockets.

...The previous regime, armed with its arrogant and intolerant ideology, denigrated man into a production force and nature into a production tool. In this way it attacked their very essence and the relationship between them. It made talented people who were capable of managing their own affairs and making an enterprise living in their own country into cogs in some kind of monstrous, ramshackle, smelly machine whose purpose no one can understand. It can do nothing more than slowly but surely wear itself down, and all the cogs in it.

—Vaclav Havel, president of Czechoslovakia, in New Year's address to nation, January 1, 1990

The primary reasons for the need for perestroika were not the sluggish economy and the rate of technological development but an underlying mass alienation of working people from significant social goals and values. This social alienation is rooted in the economic system formed in the 1930s, which made state property, run by a vast bureaucratic apparatus, the dominant form of ownership....For 50 years it was said that this was public property and belonged to everyone, but no way was ever found to make workers feel they were the co-owners and masters of the factories, farms, and enterprises. They felt themselves to be cogs in a gigantic machine.

—Tatyana Zaslavskaya, Soviet sociologist, in *Voices of Glasnost*

In a totalitarian situation people conform outwardly to the prevailing morals and isolate themselves in microsocieties where they live, work, and die. People act according to moral double standards, an unwritten social contract that everyone knows. Workers are allowed to idle and steal, as long as they come to party meetings and applaud. Only a small mafia of party bosses and enterprise bosses took it seriously; the rest of the people cut themselves off.

—Valtr Komarek, deputy prime minister of Czechoslovakia, *NRC Handelsblad* (Rotterdam), February 6, 1990

A Civic Society

Our immediate aims are to form a civic society in which the law will guarantee the individual a free choice of the forms of his social, political, and economic existence...where there will be no monopoly of a single ideology or worldview, but freedom of conscience will prevail.

—Vyacheslav Shostakovsky, rector of the Moscow Higher Party School, at the 28th CPSU Congress, July 6, 1990

The task today is to learn democracy and feel deeply and recognize in practice the entire distinctiveness and self-worth of each human life, each personality. That is, to become a truly humane society—in being and consciousness and basis and superstructure, without the feverish, paranoid thirst for the blood of one's neighbors.

—Alexander Yakovlev, member of Soviet Politburo, *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, February 14, 1990

The wall that was separating people from freedom has collapsed. And I hope that the nations of the world will never let it be rebuilt.

—Lech Walesa, Solidarity leader, addressing the U.S. Congress, November 15, 1989

Outdated Ideology

Marxism-Leninism as a state ideology is outdated....The dictatorship of the proletariat and social revolution as a transition from one state of society to another is a vision of the world that is today not consonant with reality, and accordingly Marxism-Leninism can invite us only into the 19th century, while we need an invitation into the 21st century. And finally, Marxism-Leninism is an aggregate of certain theories that have not been confirmed by social practice....The main thing is that Marxism-Leninism has failed utterly to justify itself, namely, that capitalism as a system is coming to an end and that it has no prospects for society, is completely outdated....It turns out that new stages have appeared in capitalism, and the opportunity for its self-development have turned out to be such that now no sensible person would dare to predict the end of this social system in the foreseeable future.

—Yuri Afanasyev, USSR People's Deputy and rector of the Moscow Historical Archival Institute, quoted in *Sovietskaya Estoniya* (Talinn, Estonia), January 18, 1990

We wanted to create a new man, with only unselfish thoughts. I am afraid it is not possible.

—Vaclav Klaus, finance minister of Czechoslovakia, before group of Wall Street investors, March 1, 1990

If we seriously want to engage in perestroika then we cannot rely on methods of an organization which has permeated every pore of our social organism and which interferes—at the Party's will—in any affairs of state and social life, the economy and culture, sport and religion. There is not one sphere of life free from the KGB's hand or shadow.

— Oleg Kalugin, former KGB major-general and USSR People's Deputy, June 20, 1990

The Essence of Stalinism Is Leninism

Force—the use of force, violence—is what our history is all about.

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If our leader and founder [Lenin] created foundations for anything, it is the elevation of the state policy of mass coercion and terror into principle. And besides, he elevated lawlessness into a principle of state policy. This was continued throughout the whole Stalinist period and created numerous victims; this went through the Brezhnev period, when in a drunken stupor the national wealth was squandered wholesale and retail.

—Yuri Afanasyev, USSR People's Deputy and rector of the Moscow Historical Archival Institute, before the Congress of People's Deputies, March 12, 1990

When you read Lenin, you can understand everything that has happened in this country.

—Valery Ryumin, mayor of Ryazan, a Russian provincial capital, *Washington Post*, November 14, 1990

We cannot talk about bad Stalin and good Lenin. It is more productive to recognize the Leninist essence of Stalinism.

—Yuri Afanasyev, USSR People's Deputy and rector of the Moscow Historical Archival Institute, quoted in *Sovietskaya Estoniya* (Talinn, Estonia), January 18, 1990

Economic Liberty

We decided to build a market economy in Poland, not for doctrinal reasons—we have said goodbye to those forever, I hope—but because no one has yet invented a more efficient one.

—Leszek Balcerowicz, finance minister of Poland, on Polish television, June 7, 1990

We are consciously limiting the role of the state in the economy. It is no longer the supermanager of a superfactory, the main boss and the main controller, the main storekeeper and the main distributor of goods and services. Several dozen years of costly experience have shown that the state cannot do this well, and, in particular, cannot inspire energy in people so that they may work productively, efficiently, and economically.

—Tadeusz Mazowiecki, prime minister of Poland, before the Sejm (Polish parliament), January 18, 1990

We categorically favor the concept of private initiative. The economic foundation of totalitarianism has been the absolute power derived from the monopoly on property. We shall never have political pluralism without economic pluralism. But some of those who still have Communist leanings try to equate private initiative with "exploitation" and maintain that the emergence of rich entrepreneurs would be a catastrophe. In the same way they try to play on the feelings of those who are lazy and would therefore envy the wealthy, and those who—having once enjoyed the privileges of the Communist system—are afraid of the effort of working.

—Timisoara Declaration, Romania, March 11, 1990

We cannot talk of freedom unless we have private property.

—Gavriil Popov, mayor of Moscow, Cato Institute/Soviet Academy of Sciences conference, September 10, 1990

How can you say you have a motherland when you don't own a single square meter of land which you can leave to your grandchildren?

—Suyatoslav Fyodorov, Soviet laser scientist, *New York Times*, March 11, 1990

For decades in our country, we have fostered a beggar/consumer mentality: the state will provide and decide everything for you—poorly, perhaps, but provide equally for everyone, give you all the basic necessities. And this parasitic mentality is very widespread here. Yet a market economy, in order to function, requires a very different type of mentality: enterprise, initiative, responsibility, every person solving his own problems. The government does nothing more than create the conditions in which one can employ one's initiative and enterprise; the rest is up to the individual.

—Anatoly Sobchak, mayor of Leningrad, Cato Institute/Soviet Academy of Sciences conference, September 11, 1990

We have become morally ill, because we have become accustomed to saying one thing and thinking another.

—Vaclav Havel

A most important task of the initial stage of the transition to the market consists of the creation of the proper conditions for the development of the key figure of market relations—the entrepreneur. For many years enterprise was not valued here but punished. Now it has to be acknowledged that the sole resource on which we can count upon transition to the market is the potential of human assertiveness based on people's aspirations to secure for themselves normal living conditions.

—"500 Day Plan" for Soviet economic reform

No Third Way

We don't want to try out a third way. We will leave it to the richer countries to try out a third way and if they succeed maybe we will follow.

—Leszek Balcerowicz, finance minister of Poland, *Washington Post*, November 30, 1989

To speak of any future for socialism in this country is nonsense....Our goal now is to lead Bulgaria to a modern, democratic capitalism.

—Zhelyo Zhelev, leader of the Union of Democratic Forces (and future president), December 18, 1989

We want a market economy without any adjectives. Any compromises will only fuzzy up the problems we

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"If a people strives for independence, you cannot restrain them by force."—Boris Yeltsin

have. To pursue a so-called third way is foolish. We had our experience with this in the 1960s when we looked for socialism with a human face. It did not work, and we must be explicit when we say that we are not aiming for a more efficient version of a system that has failed. The market is indivisible; it cannot be an instrument in the hands of central planners.

—Vaclav Klaus, finance minister of Czechoslovakia, *Reason*, June 1990

Learning from the West

It is a paradox that in the 20th century the ideas of socialism have not been realized in the socialist countries, but in other countries, the capitalist countries. In the countries which call themselves socialist, socialism has been distorted to the degree where it causes disgust.

—Yuri Afanasyev, USSR People's Deputy and rector of the Moscow Historical Archival Institute, *Dagens Nyheter* (Stockholm), January 3, 1990

I have been to the West and have become convinced that we can use many things from the Western democracies, including the attitude to property, the parliamentary system, and much more. There is no reason to renounce all this because it is capitalist. Why should we do that if it is rational and useful?

—Boris Yeltsin, USSR People's Deputy (and future president of the Russian Republic), *Det Fri Aktuelt* (Copenhagen), December 2, 1989

I was told that capitalism is in the process of rotting away. New York was described as a pile of gravestones piled upon one on the other. That's not true at all. Some of what are, in the United States, called "slums" would pass for pretty decent housing in the Soviet Union.

—Boris Yeltsin, USSR People's Deputy (and future president of the Russian Republic), at Columbia University, September 11, 1989

The people of [America] are able to work with excellence and relax with good taste. They are not obsessive, they are quite free, and they live without looking back. On the streets, I met many polite, smiling people. Did I see any of the social problems in America? That is not what I went there for—I have seen enough social problems at home to make me sick. I was not looking for the speck of dust in someone else's eye.

—Boris Yeltsin, USSR People's Deputy (and future president of the Russian Republic), *Sovietskaya Molodezh*, January 4, 1990 (interviewed on November 25, 1989)

Spiritual Revival

I do not know what a miracle is. Nonetheless, I daresay at this moment I am a party to a miracle: a man who only six months ago was taken prisoner as an enemy of his own state is welcoming today, as president, the first Pope in the history of the Catholic Church ever to set foot in this country. For many decades the spirit...has been banished from our country. I have the honor to be

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a witness to the moment when its soil is being kissed by the apostle of spirituality.

—Vaclav Havel, president of Czechoslovakia, welcoming Pope John Paul II, April 21, 1990

Freedom of conscience and religion is a basic human right,...a prerequisite for renewing a political system...that reflects a pluralism of ideas in society.

—from the Hungarian "Law on Freedom of Conscience, Religion, and the Churches," passed January 24, 1990

Thank You, America

The world remembers the wonderful principle of the American democracy: "government of the people, by the people, for the people."

...The ideals which underlie this glorious American republic and which are still alive here are also living in faraway Poland.

—Lech Walesa, Solidarity leader, addressing the U.S. Congress, November 15, 1989

Ladies and gentlemen, from this podium, I'm expressing words of gratitude to the American people. It is they who supported us in the difficult days of martial law and persecution. It is they who sent us aid, they who protested against violence. Today, when I am able to freely address the whole world from this elevated spot, I would like to thank them with special warmth.

It is thanks to them that the word "Solidarity" soared across borders and reached every corner of the world. Thanks to them the people of Solidarity were never alone.

—Lech Walesa, Solidarity leader, addressing the U.S. Congress, November 15, 1989

[Reagan] turned out not to be such a simpleton as we were led to believe.

—Boris Yeltsin, future president of the Russian Republic, *New York Times Magazine*, September 23, 1989

The Artificial Soviet Union

The USSR is not a country, nor is it a state. The Eurasian territory that is marked as such on maps is a world of worlds made of different cultures and civilizations. It is a neighborhood of states and nations that are tired of their colonial and colonizing past, that have been tortured and humiliated by Stalinist efforts at unification.

—Yuri Afanasyev, USSR People's Deputy and rector of the Moscow Historical Archival Institute, *Time*, March 12, 1990

We witnessed the artificial creation of a society, something like a gigantic human machine in which 280 million people of different cultures and different civilizations, geographics, and language were forcibly meshed together into one huge conglomerate. And this gigantic human machine was based on mass violence, on centralized control and planning.

Naturally, the colossus turned out to be standing on feet of clay. It is doomed to destruction. Now this natural process of collapse is going on. It looks as though it were planned, but no one was really aware of how it would take place or when.

—Yuri Afanasyev, USSR People's Deputy and rector of the Moscow Historical Archival Institute, *Washington Post*, November 16, 1989

With regard to the natural desire of the Balts to distance themselves from the center, the [reasons include] the thousands upon thousands of ruined lives and the...outrageous method by which these peoples were made part of the union....Freedom and independence have been so suppressed that now people need to feel that they are an independent state and sovereign as much as they need air.

—Yuri Afanasyev, USSR People's Deputy and rector of the Moscow Historical Archival Institute, quoted in *Sovietskaya Estoniya* (Talinn, Estonia), January 18, 1990

Renouncing World Revolution

Less security for the United States compared to the Soviet Union would not be in our interest, since it could lead to mistrust and produce instability.

—Mikhail Gorbachev, USSR General Secretary, *Time*, May 23, 1988

We are not keen on the export of revolution as we must deal with the monstrous deformations of socialism in our own country.

—Stanislav Kondrashov, Soviet political commentator, *Izvestia*, May 12, 1989

It is no secret that many Third World recipients of Soviet aid are notorious for their authoritarian or dictatorial methods of rule, the cults of their leaders, a ruthless suppression of the opposition, and for corruption....

In mapping out future aid programs, there is a need to discard as soon as possible the Cold War stereotypes, when any anti-American regime in the Third World, declaring allegiance to Marxism-Leninism, could count on Soviet support.

—Andrei Kortunov, Soviet intellectual and journalist, *Moscow News*, December 10, 1989

If a people strives for independence, you cannot restrain them by force. And the more pressure the authorities exert, the stronger the people's resistance will be. In our own Russia an analogous situation is taking shape with certain autonomous republics. But we will operate not by means of pressure and threats....Let the republic itself decide within what limits it will really be able to realize its independence.

—Boris Yeltsin, president of the Russian Republic, *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, August 8, 1990

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The Politics of Less

A Debate on Big-Government Conservatism

Fred Barnes vs. Grover Norquist

President Bush has inadvertently reunited two groups of conservatives who had been battling for several years over the "soul" of the conservative movement. Libertarians who contend that conservatives must stand for the dismantling of most government programs and neoconservatives willing to accept a certain amount of government as long as it is used for conservative purposes have been brought together, at least for the time being, in common opposition to the president's tax increases and his appeasement of the congressional leadership. Substantial differences nevertheless remain between the two groups—both in their contrasting visions of the public good and in their conceptions of the most effective political strategy for conservatives.

In July 1990 some of these differences were fleshed out in a "Third Generation" debate at The Heritage Foundation. Fred Barnes, senior editor of *The New Republic* and author of an article articulating a vision of "Big-Government Conservatism" in *The American Spectator*, squared off against Grover Norquist, director of Americans for Tax Reform and a leading libertarian strategist. What was perhaps most remarkable about the debate was the degree of agreement over policy, despite the underlying philosophical and political differences. Excerpts from their debate follow:

Barnes: I start with the proposition that big government is a fact of life. We've had conservative Congresses—in the '50s, the early '60s, and the early 1980s. We've had conservative presidents. And yet government continues to grow.

A good rule of thumb is that if Ronald Reagan couldn't get rid of a government program or agency, nobody can; it's here for life. Reagan was the most ideologically conservative president in the past 50 years. He and David Stockman tried hard in the 1980s to eliminate roughly 40 federal programs: the Small Business Administration, the Economic Development Administration, the Amtrak subsidy, rural electrification, the Community Services Block Grant, the rural airlines subsidy, and so on. Almost all of these programs are still with us. Reagan could not reduce the size of government, even with the big deficit.

The reason is that people like big government. Not bigger government, but government roughly the size it is now. Now that doesn't mean that they think government's efficient; obviously it's not. Or that they want to pay more taxes. The revolt against New Jersey Governor Florio's tax increase is fresh evidence they don't. But they do like big government in many, many areas, from defense and Social Security, to health and education.

What all of this means is that if conservatives don't use big government for conservative ends, liberals will use it for liberal ends. And liberals can and will use it because they fill the ranks of the bureaucracy and they sit on the committee staffs on Capitol Hill, which in turn are influenced by the lobbyists for special interests that want government to do more.

No Constituency for Cutting

Let me tie this to politics. I've thought for a long time that Democrats and liberals are much better politicians than Republicans and conservatives. Nothing I've seen in the Reagan years—except for Reagan himself—has led me to change my mind about that. And one of the reasons is that liberals like government. They talk positively about what they're going to do. Now, we know government doesn't live up to most of the things liberals promise, that it's inefficient, that it's counterproductive in many cases. But liberals are more appealing candidates because they're talking about positive things that they're going to do. Spending is more politically saleable than cutting. There is no lobby in Washington for cutting. There's no constituency for cutting. Vin Weber, congressman from Minnesota, one of the best conservatives I know in Congress, once told me that he was glad to be leaving the Budget Committee, which cuts, and joining the Appropriations Committee, which spends. It's better politics.

Another thing to remember is that you can't govern without a governing majority. If you're just trying to cut, you're never going to have a governing majority. A libertarian, for instance, could never be elected president, and if a libertarian were somehow elected by a fluke, he or she could never have a governing majority.

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Big-government conservatives understand all this; certainly Jack Kemp does. (Although Kemp rejects the label, he certainly fits the description of a big-government conservative.) They understand that a lot of government is politics. They accept that there are programs that conservatives might not like but the public supports widely, and it is crazy to try to eliminate them.

Social Security is the best example. Ronald Reagan tried to cut back the Social Security program in 1981, and backed off almost immediately. Now, does anyone think that Ronald Reagan should have jeopardized the effectiveness of his entire administration by going to the mat in 1981 to cut the Social Security program? As Jack Kemp says, why tilt at windmills on an issue that's been decisively resolved by the public for 50 years? Why continually dredge up an issue that really has little to do with the survival and extension of democratic capitalism, and has caused more conservatives to lose elections than any other single issue?

Once, in an interview with David Stockman when he was budget director, I asked why the Reagan administration didn't go for deep cuts in veterans' benefits and military pensions. He said simply, "We have to maintain a governing majority." Stockman didn't like those programs, he thought they should be cut deeply, but if you're going to have a governing conservative majority, you cannot alienate the people, like veterans, who are part of it.

Four Activist Proposals

Big-government conservatives realize that there is a model for conservative government other than minimal government, and it's what Kemp calls "activist programmatic conservative government." I can think of four proposals that really fit the model.

One expensive, but wonderful, conservative program was actually proposed by a maverick liberal at *The New Republic*, Mickey Kaus. Kaus calls for entirely overhauling the welfare system, but guaranteeing everybody a job at minimum wage or lower. His idea is based on the very conservative concept that only work works. Only if people get a job of some kind will they develop the skills and the initiative they need to improve their own lives. This program would cost about $30 billion a year, which is more than we're spending now. But able-bodied people who wouldn't work wouldn't get any money—zilch. Sounds like a good program to me.

Another program addresses the need in this country for more engineers and scientists. Now, here is one of the rare problems you can solve just by throwing money at it. If we simply offer full college scholarships to anybody who would become an engineer or a scientist of one type or another, we no longer would have a situation where Japan, with half our population, turns out twice as many scientists and engineers as the U.S. does every year.

Highways and airports, a particular obsession of mine, would also benefit from large infusions of cash. Our national economy is hurt because our highways and airports are embarrassingly inadequate. We need to double the size of the interstate highway system, and the only way we're going to do that is if the federal government spends the money. The states aren't going to do it; they can't. It's a national problem. The same with airports. We need another airport in Boston, another one in Atlanta, and so on.

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"A good rule of thumb is that if Ronald Reagan couldn't cut a program, no one can."—Fred Barnes

Defense is another area where we need big-government conservatism. Most conservatives are not isolationists and realize that the United States is going to play a role around the world. Even with the decline of Communism, there are threats to the U.S., and we need a strong military, a space program, and the strategic defense initiative, all of which are going to cost a lot of money. These things are not going to be built by the private sector, they're not going to be built by states, they're not going to be built by anyone but the federal government. Nuclear weapons, for example, have kept peace in the world, what we've had of it, for the last 45 years. But there's no commercial use for nuclear weapons. The government's going to have to produce them, and it's going to cost money.

NORQUIST: Ever since I was a young lad, I looked forward to the opportunity to come to The Heritage Foundation to debate some "limousine liberal" or some "bed-wetting Bolshevik" or perhaps a "trust-fund Trotskyite." Or, if that wasn't available, perhaps an apostate like Kevin Phillips, the dean of the Albert Speer School of Economics. So it is disconcerting to be here to debate with my friend Fred Barnes, who is normally a friend of the people, who has no known ties to the savings and loan industry, and whose private life precludes his ever getting a grant from the National Endowment for

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the Arts. But as this debate continues over the next several months, I do hope that we will bring to justice the North Korean agents who have stolen his mind.

Mr. Barnes argues that big-government conservatives are realistic, that people like government at roughly its present size. I think that Congress and the president may like government at its present size—indeed, they voted for it, they put it into place. But it's not fair to suggest that the American people ever demanded the sugar-quota program, which raises the cost of sugar by $3 billion, which devastates our allies in the Philippines and the Caribbean, and which benefits perhaps fewer than 40,000 sugar growers. Or the peanut program. Or Davis-Bacon, the $2 billion act that benefits a few labor-union bosses and costs everyone else money, while keeping blacks and other minorities out of government contracting work. Or the Small Business Administration, which even the small business community doesn't want, at a cost of $300 million a year. What we do find is that there is a coalition of spending interests that works very hard in Washington for those programs. That we have a government as large as we do simply tells us we have to work harder to build our own coalitions.

Throughout the 1970s one could have just as easily said the American people have decided that a 70-percent top income tax rate is important to the country. We've voted over and over on this, we've had it since Herbert Hoover gave it to us. Then Jack Kemp changed the political equation and denied a permanent victory to the Left. The same happened with trucking and airline regulations, which weren't put in because the people demanded them, but rather to benefit a handful of people by ripping off the consumers to the tune of tens of billions of dollars a year. These regulations were changed because we put together a coalition of interests that opposed spending and regulations, and we can do it again.

Domestic Brezhnev Doctrine

What Mr. Barnes is putting forward is the Brezhnev doctrine of government spending. And we reject it, just as we rejected the Brezhnev doctrine of Eastern Europe. And, just as the Brezhnev doctrine was defeated in Eastern Europe, it can be defeated here.

Mr. Barnes also argues that big-government conservatives are programmatic; they like to be in favor of things because that puts them on the political offensive. But free-market conservatives have always been in favor of things. We're in favor of individual liberty, we're in favor of freedom, we're in favor of peace. In the 1970s Jack Kemp pointed out that if we talk about these ideas in terms of jobs and pay increases and more take-home pay and entrepreneurship and opportunity and home-ownership, we can sell them better. And to get those things we are in favor of requires less government, less taxes, less regulation. I agree completely: let's be *for* things. But that doesn't mean being for big government. Let's be true to our principles and in favor of changes in the government that get us where we want to go.

Mr. Barnes says since we're going to have big government anyway, it makes sense to have *conservative* big government. I don't object to changing the priorities within the government that we have, but our goal has to be to reject the Brezhnev doctrine that says it is a given that 22 percent of our GNP is going to be stolen from us by the federal government.

Mr. Barnes claims that if Reagan couldn't cut spending, no one can. But he overlooks that Reagan accomplished a great deal. When you husband your coalition, you fight one battle at a time. I didn't expect Reagan to slay all the dragons at once. But he has weakened the other team. He has reduced their numbers. He has reduced their power and scope in many ways. And our goal is to build on that step by step. The Fabian Socialists didn't build the bureaucratic welfare state in Britain overnight; they did it slowly. We can be "Fabian" free-marketeers and begin the process of ratcheting down. When Samuel Gompers, a labor leader at the turn of the century, was asked what working Americans wanted, he simply replied, "More." What do we want? What do conservatives want of government? What do we want government to be? Less. And a year from now, what do we want? Less. And when we've cut it by a third, what do we want? Less. And when we've got it down by half, what do we want? Less.

Liberals are creatures of government; we are not. When you create government jobs, you create more of them. When you create more private-sector jobs, you create more of us. I once worked in upstate New York with a taxpayer group. The town employed 12 policemen. The taxpayer group said we can get by with 11. The police fought: "Just absolutely can't do it, can't do it." Finally, they cut one from the force and he went into the private sector. A year later he came to the taxpayer group and he said, "We taxpayers"—because now he was one of us—"have been paying for 11 police officers. I tell you, I worked there; they only need eight."

Let's remember: Ronald Reagan turned us around from a country that was falling apart in terms of economics and defense, and got us going. I didn't expect him to do everything; I expected him to leave something for us to do in the years ahead. Our job now is to slowly turn, every day and every way, more of "them" into "us." Mr. Barnes' argument suggests that some of "us" may be turning into some of "them."

BARNES: I didn't say that Reagan achieved nothing at all; quite the contrary. Reagan talked for years and years about four things he wanted to do as president. He wanted to reduce taxes, cut the size of government, install a more assertive and anti-Communist foreign policy, and build up the military. He achieved three out of four; he did not reduce the size of government. Government grew. The budget was around $600 billion when Reagan came to office; now it is about $1.3 trillion. And it wasn't that Reagan wanted to leave something behind for young conservatives to work on. He really tried to cut the size of government; it was impossible.

I think Mr. Norquist mischaracterized the genius of the advice that Jack Kemp gave to Ronald Reagan back in January 1980, at the beginning of Reagan's successful campaign for the presidency. Kemp told Reagan, "You have to stop talking just about cutting spending, cutting government. That's not enough. You have to talk about

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something you're going to do for people: talk about cutting taxes." He told Reagan to drop the stories about the welfare queen. "I know you enjoy it," he told Reagan, "and it's an appealing story, and a lot of conservatives like it, but in the long run it's not what people want to hear. They want to hear something positive you're going to do for them, and cutting taxes is it. So don't talk about cutting spending as the sole focus of your campaign." Cutting spending is pretty much what Reagan had talked about, first as a spokesman for General Electric, then as governor of California, and then as a candidate for president in '76. But Reagan changed, and that's why he was elected president.

Reagan came to reduce Washington's role in the country, to make it smaller, to make it less of an attraction to people. And just the opposite happened. Reagan made Washington a magnet for a whole new breed of people, mainly young conservatives. The irony of the Reagan administration's goal to reduce the size of Washington was obvious when Bob Tuttle, the personnel director at the White House, sent around a form to all the Reagan political appointees at the end of the Reagan administration to find out what they wanted to do: Did they want to stay on in the Bush administration? Almost all of them did; as it turned out, they liked government. These were conservatives—they thought they could do something useful, they wanted the jobs. Of all the people I knew in the Reagan administration, I didn't know a single one who didn't want to stay on in the Bush administration—well, maybe one or two. If they didn't stay on in the Bush administration, almost all of them stayed in Washington. Now, what is the attraction for conservatives in Washington?

NORQUIST: Mr. Barnes gave some examples of government programs he likes. One was welfare-for-jobs, which was an idea that Pete du Pont first supported. And while I'm not sure the $30 billion figure is one I'd be happy with, requiring people to work someplace to get their welfare checks makes it easier for welfare recipients to say, "I'd rather go into the private sector." But guaranteeing jobs for everyone sounds like something that you'd find in an Eastern European constitution.

I would not reject any effort that costs the same amount of money, or even conceivably more money, if it resulted in more anti-government conservatives and fewer big-government liberals, and "we" were made stronger and "they" were weaker. Educational vouchers are a good example. Spend the same number of dollars, but give the vouchers to parents, empower them, take the power away from 2.5 million unionized school teachers and bureaucrats in this country, and give parents the choice. That leads to more people in the private schools, and less money being spent on the government.

Frankly, in many ways, it's what we did in dealing with the Soviet Union. We spent an awful lot of money to break the back of, or at least drive back, the Soviet threat. I wish there were a liberal program that had the equivalent of our peace dividend. We had a defense buildup because we were going to solve a problem, and we've solved it to a certain extent. I want to hear when liberals are going to come back to us with some welfare program that's fixed everything, and now we don't have to spend as much money on it.

As for the shortage of engineers and scientists, you can solve that problem by issuing green cards and getting government out of the business of stopping productive foreigners from coming to the country.

As for highways and airports, there's an awful lot that can be accomplished at the state level through privatization. I'm not sure that if you hand construction over to the government, which has been in charge of infrastructure during the last 40 years, that you solve the main problem: government doesn't want to spend on upkeep.

On defense, yes, we're going to have to continue to spend money, but not as much as before. And, frankly, we're not going to be forced into the position Reagan was where people would say, "You want your defense budget, it's going to cost you." And senators from New York would come and say, "I want this money spent if you're going to get my MX vote." If we're not out there begging for increases in defense, we may not have to pay the blackmail money that some in Congress demanded.

The problem with the Bush administration is not that they are all big-government conservatives. The problem is that they're not conservatives at all.

—Fred Barnes

QUESTION FROM AUDIENCE: Mr. Barnes, you're advocating basically surrendering to the big-government conservative crowd, or liberals in sheep's clothing, as it were. Does that mean we surrender to the "Bushies" and give up our principles, or should we continue to fight for what we believe, namely, that we've never seen government be able to do anything with our money other than spend, and we could do that better ourselves?

BARNES: Most people don't agree with you about government, unfortunately. I wish government did much less. But, if people are campaigning for office, and go around talking like Grover Norquist—"We want less government, no matter what, we want less; if we cut it in half, we still want less," and talk about all taxation as money stolen from the people—they are not going to be elected. They may always have a job at The Heritage Foundation, but they're never going to have a majority in Congress. You have to deal with the reality that it's not surrendering to big government, it's accepting big government as a

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fact of life. The problem with the Bush administration is not that they are all big-government conservatives. The problem is that they're not conservatives at all, and in most agencies whatever the bureaucracy puts in the "in" basket, that's the agenda they'll work on. Jack Kemp, Bill Bennett, and people like that are a minority in the Bush administration.

NORQUIST: I'm not suggesting that my phrasing is rhetoric that I would recommend on the campaign trail, but those of us who are in the movement should at least know in what direction we're heading and continue

Mr. Barnes is putting forward the Brezhnev doctrine of government spending. And we reject it, just as we rejected the Brezhnev doctrine of Eastern Europe.

—Grover Norquist

to push for that. Yes, the present size of the government is a political fact right now. The Soviet empire was a political fact. Our goal is to destroy the Soviet empire. We're getting there. Our goal is to make the government significantly smaller than it is now. We'll get there, too.

What's the difference between big-government conservatism and the Great Society programs that have been so disastrous for the poor?

BARNES: Well, big-government conservatives aren't advocating Great Society solutions. They advocate completely different programs, like the program proposed by Mickey Kaus that replaces welfare with work, or vouchers, or enterprise zones. They aren't big-government liberals. The difference is an important one.

NORQUIST: The government does a lot more damage than just taking people's money and misspending it. With a lot of its regulations, big government has destroyed people's lives. I wish Jack Kemp would talk more about the way government raises the price of houses. It's not just the federal government, but labor union thugs who get the rules changed so that only certain kinds of construction are okay, pricing families out of being able to own a home, or making them delay buying a home for several years.

I think we're making tremendous progress—there are four million fewer union members in this country than when Reagan took office. And total job creation is up 20 million. We created 24 million new jobs in unfettered industries, and let slide four million jobs that union bosses had priced right out of the market. The average union dues in this country are $300 per person: four million times $300 is $1.2 billion a year that the labor union bosses don't have for spending on politics, such as passing Davis-Bacon-style legislation, which destroys the hopes and aspirations of lower-income people.

If we keep that pressure up, if we don't pass some labor reform bill—which Dukakis would have given us, and I don't think Bush will—we can continue to see free-market jobs created and fewer union jobs.

Does big-government conservatism include racial quotas?

NORQUIST: The idea of a "color-blind" society is generational. When older people of good will hear "civil rights" they think "Selma." People our age hear "civil rights" and think "quotas." Older conservatives haven't pushed for the color-blind society. I think we should. It would be a vote-winner, with both blacks and whites.

BARNES: Mr. Norquist is exactly right—it is generational. In fact, Bush could veto the civil-rights bill with total impunity if he just frames the argument honestly as one between quotas and civil rights, and says he's against quotas but for civil rights.

At the same time that President Bush is erasing the distinctions between conservatives and liberals, and between Republicans and Democrats, abortion and related issues seem to be splitting social conservatives and libertarian conservatives. Isn't opposition to the size of government the issue that keeps a lot of libertarians and social conservatives together?

BARNES: For the Bush administration, the one thing that united libertarians and social conservatives was "no new taxes," and Bush has thrown that away. But "no new taxes" is not the same as just attacking the bureaucrats in Washington, on which there's some agreement between both sides, too. You talked correctly about Bush erasing the distinction between liberals and conservatives. It's the same thing Nixon did. It serves Bush's purposes, his personal political purposes to win reelection in 1992. But it doesn't help the Republican Party, and it doesn't help conservatives.

NORQUIST: The tax issue is not the same issue, necessarily, as spending, but in the long run, it becomes the same. Taxes are the lifeblood of the state. If we can keep a stranglehold on taxes, at some point the extremities of the state start to wither and die. That's what Reagan tried to do, and even used the deficit to try to rein in big government. Certainly, Gramm-Rudman would have reined in spending if Bush had held firm on taxes and allowed a sequester. That's why the sell-out on taxes is devastating. It allows government to spend more money.

My question concerns another potential danger of big-government conservatism—the emergence of a cor-

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poratist or proto-fascist state of government–business partnerships with lots of subsidies and handouts, trade protection, anti-immigration policies, and infringements on personal freedoms and liberties. In other words, will we create on the Right the same kind of monster that we're trying to fight on the Left?

BARNES: What you're talking about is a legitimate worry. I don't think it's an inevitability.

If you have enough big-government conservatives—and the word "conservative" is important here—they will guard against that because their agenda would be so different from the one you described. Your description sounds exactly like Japan to me.

NORQUIST: I just want to put in a good word for the NEA and for its $5,000 grants to obscene art. I think this is very good for conservatives strategically because it reminds taxpayers that the government is wasting their money, that it shares none of their values, and that the folks who are funded by Washington frankly spit on their values. For the same reason, I like the 55-mile-an-hour speed limit, and the buzzer for your seat belts. Every time you get in the car, you say to yourself, "I hate those people." There was an old theory that good laws should be abolished, and that bad laws should be enforced, because the good laws only encourage respect for the state, and the bad laws are really irritating. The really obnoxious stuff that the government does makes voters willing to listen to us on the larger issues, in terms of the contempt that this city and its officials have for ordinary men and women.

If you pursue the Republican big-government strategy, won't the liberals come along and say, "The Republicans do a lot for you, but we'll do more for you. We'll spend more on your individual program, and we'll take care of you better."?

BARNES: You are blurring the distinction between liberal big government and conservative big government. Liberals, when they promise all these things, are saying something else, that they're going to raise taxes, and people don't want their taxes raised. Big-government conservatives don't want to raise taxes. Also, you're assuming that probably liberals are going to promise more government—a safe assumption. Well, I don't think people want a whole lot more government, so that appeal won't work, particularly when it's coupled with the inevitability of hefty tax increases.

NORQUIST: Big-government conservatives set aside what have been and remain principles for us. Bush has done this on the tax issue. We all voted for Bush, thinking he was going to put criminals in prison and not raise our taxes, and now he's raising taxes. We really damage our team when conservatives flip-flop on matters of principle.

It is rational for someone looking at the present size of government and the present makeup of Congress and the present outlook of our president to say, "Boy, we are

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"Samuel Gompers said the goal of labor unions was 'More.' What do conservatives want of government? Less."—Grover Norquist

really saddled for a while with this big government." Well, we're certainly saddled with it today, and I don't see the budget next year getting much better, but we shouldn't ever say this is acceptable. This level of government simply is an abomination. A much smaller government would annoy me and keep me up at night.

We may be a minority in outlook, but a lot of movements have started as minorities. We may be more hard-core than the Republican Party establishment; I expect that to continue to be true for some time. But we have moved the Republican Party establishment on marginal tax rates, from 70 percent to 28 percent. And people went kicking and screaming on that change. We need to make similar changes, and we should be innovative. Jack Kemp and Pete du Pont have presented a lot of good ideas, on privatization, on vouchers, on ways to make the reduction of government something that we can sell. We need to go to work. I don't underestimate the challenges. It's going to take us many years, but the fight's worth it, because what they're doing is wrong.

BARNES: The collapse of Communism does not mean that everything is possible. Reducing government to the Calvin Coolidge-level, which might still keep Mr. Norquist up at night, is simply not possible. To the extent that conservatives—particularly young conservatives—concentrate on that as their particular goal, it's counterproductive because there are other things that they could work on that have a chance of happening. If they spend all of their time trying to get rid of the Small Business Administration, then they're not going to be achieving the things they could do in a conservative anti-poverty program, in defense, in space, in reducing taxes, in making the economy of this country more efficient. I hope young conservatives would concentrate on the achievable. ☎

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In Search of a Strategy

Bush's Professional but Rudderless Foreign Policy

Kim R. Holmes

George Bush has been a good crisis manager in foreign policy. He has acted decisively with his swift victory in Panama and his forceful military buildup in Saudi Arabia. His emphasis on caution and stability has given him the prudence to support German reunification, resist a complete break with China, and avoid isolating Japan. But he has been too supportive of Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, and too slow to prepare American policy for the coming crackup of the Soviet Union. And he has so far failed to meet his most important foreign policy challenge—defining America's role in the post-Cold War era.

The end of the Cold War requires the same kind of fundamental reevaluation of U.S. foreign policy goals as occurred at its beginning. Presidents Harry Truman and Dwight Eisenhower understood the historic need for a new American strategy to confront the rise of Soviet power. They saw that isolationism had led the United States into two world wars and that, even after the Nazis and Imperial Japan had been defeated, America had to remain a superpower to protect its interests. With the help of such thinkers as Paul Nitze, H. Rowan Gaither, George Kennan, and Albert Wohlstetter, Truman and Eisenhower forged the strategy of containing Soviet expansionism. This strategy was easy to understand, had clear-cut goals, and satisfied two very important but often contradictory American impulses: it served U.S. security and economic interests while at the same time promising Americans that they were engaged in a moral crusade against some terrible evil—in this case, Communism.

The United States still has security and economic interests throughout the globe—a free and secure Europe, a prosperous and stable Mexico, access to Persian Gulf oil, stability in Asia, freedom of the seas, free trade, safety for U.S. citizens traveling abroad. But these interests do not lend themselves to the single galvanizing crusades that have typified America's global engagements—from "making the world safe for democracy" in World War I, to fighting Nazis in World War II, or containing the spread of Communism in the Cold War. The U.S. must now develop a foreign policy that places more emphasis on protecting relatively mundane and seemingly disconnected security and economic interests.

So far Bush has had difficulty articulating a strategy for the post-Cold War era. He has performed skillfully in reacting to crises. But there are limits to a foreign policy that is mostly reactive and lacking strategic moorings. Initiative is lost to others, crises are resolved (often with force) only when they come to a head, and opportunities are missed to shape a rapidly changing global order in America's favor.

Clinging to Gorbachev

The limits of this reactive approach are most evident in U.S.–Soviet relations. Bush has failed to seize the potential opportunities offered by the emergence of a more democratic Russian republic, and has instead chosen to emphasize support for Gorbachev's reform policies and for Gorbachev himself.

There are several reasons for Bush's cozy relationship with Gorbachev: gratitude over Soviet withdrawals from Eastern Europe and Afghanistan and Soviet cooperation in Nicaragua and the Persian Gulf crisis; an interest in concluding arms control and other agreements; and a sense that domestic liberalization has been going in the right direction under Gorbachev. But the key to Bush's pro-Gorbachev policy has been a mistaken belief that the Soviet president is the key to international stability. Fearing instability in the Soviet Union almost as much as Gorbachev does, Bush has hitched his star to the Soviet president, believing that only Gorbachev can keep the USSR from spinning out of control.

There are many problems with this policy. To begin with, Gorbachev and the Soviet central government are not the guarantors of stability in the Soviet Union. Instability and massive violence or even civil war will occur in the Soviet Union if the Red Army tries to stop the republics from seeking independence. But no republic seeking independence in the Soviet Union has threatened the use of arms against Moscow. From which side, then, is the pressure for violent instability coming? From the republics, which want a peaceful secession, or from Moscow, which still monopolizes the means of

Kim R. Holmes *is The Heritage Foundation's director of foreign policy studies.*

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force? The ethnic violence already in abundance in Moldavia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Uzbekistan will only be made worse by outside meddling from Moscow.

Second, America's interests are not best served by the survival of a centralized Soviet Union, which could possibly still threaten Europe and America militarily. It would be much preferable to move toward a loose confederation of more or less sovereign states that would be too weak or unwilling to threaten Europe and America.

In any case, new sovereign states are rising in the Soviet Union and no amount of U.S. support for Gorbachev will stop them. Instead of siding with Gorbachev, the U.S. should support a peaceful, negotiated settlement to disagreements between Moscow and the republics. Bush should tell Gorbachev that under no conditions would America sanction a crackdown on the republics, while advising Armenia, the Baltic states, the Ukraine, and others that U.S. support will be forthcoming *only* if peaceful means are used to obtain their goals and the rights of their minorities are respected.

Hugging the Wrong Bear

Bush's fascination with Gorbachev has led to his neglect of the rising new Russia under Boris Yeltsin. Russia's march toward independence is already well underway. On June 8, 1990, the Russian Supreme Soviet declared that Russian laws take precedence over Soviet laws, and on November 1, 1990, it adopted the radical 500-day economic reform plan written by economist Stanislav Shatalin, even though it was not approved by Gorbachev's All-Union Supreme Soviet.

Bush is missing an extraordinary opportunity to forge the beginnings of a good relationship with what could be the world's next superpower. If Russia breaks out on its own, and develops free markets and democratic institutions, it would probably let the Baltics and Central Asian republics go their own way and then form a voluntary confederation with Byelorussia, Ukraine, and any other sovereign republic who wishes to join. Under these circumstances, an anti-Communist and democratic Russia could be on friendly terms with America and would probably cease to be a threat to Europe and the United States.

At the very least, Bush should be talking to Yeltsin, instead of snubbing him as in 1989 when Yeltsin came to America. The American embassy in Moscow should step up contacts with the Russian leadership. If Yeltsin asks for it, Russia should be given observer status at the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe. These small steps should not jeopardize U.S. relations with the Soviet government—after all, Yeltsin appeared by Gorbachev's side on top of Lenin's tomb in this year's celebration of the Bolshevik Revolution—and they could serve as a strong foundation for good U.S.–Russian relations in a post-Soviet era.

Bystander in Europe

Bush has similarly practiced a passive, go-along management style in Europe. He has reacted correctly to the extraordinary opportunities resulting from decisions made in Bonn and Moscow. He has helped to hold the NATO alliance together by ensuring that a reunited Germany remained anchored in the West, and he has encouraged the development of democracy and free markets in Eastern Europe.

Bush was not the key player in the remarkable European events of 1989 and 1990. In the May 1989 NATO summit, he broke a logjam in conventional arms control by proposing a big cut of U.S. ground troops.

America's interests are not best served by the survival of a centralized Soviet Union.

But he has often been a bystander watching important moves by others, particularly the agreement by Gorbachev and Helmut Kohl that a reunified Germany could remain in NATO.

Now that the Iron Curtain has fallen, the question of America's future role has emerged and Bush has not yet adjusted his thinking to the new circumstances. He still clings to "NATO think," not realizing that the waning of the Soviet threat in Europe will dramatically reduce the need for U.S. military forces in Europe. For example, he has said that the United States will maintain at least 195,000 ground troops in Europe indefinitely. But this figure is too high if all Soviet forces are withdrawn from Europe, as they very well may be. It is understandable not to rush into drastic cuts before all Soviet forces are gone from Europe, but this does not mean ignoring what should be obvious to all: if the Soviet Union ceases to be a major threat to Europe, most U.S. forces should come home.

Hemispheric Vision

Bush has taken a far more activist approach to Latin America. On June 27, 1990, he announced his Enterprise for the Americas initiative, which will promote free trade, foreign investment, and debt relief in Latin America. Washington also has begun talks with Mexico to establish a free trade area (FTA). The Bush administration has launched a wide-scale anti-narcotics trafficking and anti-terrorist campaign in the Andean nations. Finally, Bush liberated Panama from the Noriega dictatorship, and he provided well-deserved support to Violeta Chamorro and the cause of democracy in Nicaragua.

The U.S.–Mexico FTA and Enterprise for the Americas are the kind of low-risk, go-slow, stabilizing diplomatic initiatives Bush likes best. They play to his strength in putting together international coalitions and they show his fondness for consensus-building in international diplomacy. They are also based on the profound insight that prolonged economic crises in Mexico would harm the U.S., and that free trade is more conducive to growth than protectionism. But while Bush's Enterprise for the Americas is a good idea, he has not yet devised a plan for making it a reality. Notwithstanding their public support, many Latin American leaders have com-

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plained about the vagueness of Bush's proposal. Bush could correct this problem by forming an Enterprise for the Americas Commission composed of U.S. and Latin American participants to devise a plan to implement the initiative. Still, the president should be commended for his vision of a gigantic hemispheric economy connected through free markets and free trade, and rivalling Europe and Asia in entrepreneurial vitality.

Bush's Latin American policy also can be faulted for overlooking the potential for violence and instability in Central America. The United States is not out of the woods yet in establishing stable democracies in Nicaragua, Panama, and other Central American countries. The Nicaraguan government of Violeta Chamorro is under pressure from the Sandinistas, and

Bush has failed to seize the potential opportunities offered by the emergence of a more democratic Russia.

the Panamanian government of Guillermo Endara is facing a profound economic crisis and mounting political opposition. The Communist guerrillas in El Salvador are still receiving Cuban arms. The possibility of more political violence and civil wars in this area important to U.S. security is great.

There are things Bush could do to stop this. He could ensure that the Salvadoran government of Alfredo Cristiani continue to receive badly needed military aid. And he could counsel the Nicaraguan and Panamanian governments on how to rebuild their economies and provide financial assistance to develop a strong private economic sector. This would undercut the Sandinistas and others who wish to exploit economic unrest and overthrow democratic governments and install dictatorships hostile to U.S. interests in the region.

The Right Balance in Asia

Bush's distaste for ideological conflicts, his experience as an ambassador to China in 1975–76, and his penchant for stability and the status quo serve him well in Asia. He has kept the door open to China despite the Tiananmen Square massacre, nudged Japan toward greater cooperation without producing a nationalist backlash from Tokyo, and taken some promising steps toward settling the conflict in Cambodia. These are good policies because they promote stability in the region, which in turn promotes American interests. Stability protects America's enormous trade and other economic ties with the region, dampens tensions in the Korean Peninsula where 43,000 U.S. troops are still deployed, spurs economic growth throughout the globe, and keeps the two giants of the region—China and Japan—from becoming hostile and expansionist.

Bush realizes that China is important to U.S. interests. U.S.–China trade exceeded $14 billion in 1988 and U.S. investment in China totaled $3 billion. U.S.–China ties have reduced tensions in Asia, contributed to regional stability, and helped defuse conflicts in several critical areas, principally with respect to Taiwan. Hence the reserve shown by Bush over breaking ties with China after the Tiananmen Square massacre. China is less important than it was as a geostrategic counterweight to the Soviet Union, but its support in the United Nations for the U.S. military operation in the Persian Gulf has demonstrated its usefulness in new ways. Despite the sanctions imposed after Tiananmen Square—delays in new World Bank loans, a freeze on most military cooperation, and a halt to most high-level exchanges—China's relations with the rest of the world have been slowly but steadily improving. (Saudi Arabia and Singapore have newly established relations with China, while Indonesia has resumed ties and South Korea would like to establish diplomatic relations.)

By the same token, Japan is critically important as a trading partner, an ally, and a location for U.S. military bases. U.S. trade with Japan totaled $137 billion in 1989. Bush launched in September 1989 the Structural Impediments Initiative, which aims to open Japan's markets to U.S. goods. And, Bush's attempts to get Japan to give $2 billion in assistance for the Persian Gulf military operation show a willingness to prod Japan to do more to protect the international peace and stability on which its great trade machine so much depends.

Evident in Bush's policies toward China and Japan is an appreciation of the need to encourage change, but not to push too hard too fast. Sensing the importance of these two countries to the balance of power in Asia, to the U.S. military presence there, and to global stability, Bush's policies show the right balance between a desire for these countries to make domestic reforms (human rights for China and more open trade for Japan) and the hope that they will not react violently to outside pressure and withdraw, sullen and hostile, from peaceful discourse with the outside world.

Erratic in the Middle East

Whether or not the United States goes to war against Iraq, three criticisms can be made of Bush's policy in the Persian Gulf.

First, U.S. policy has been erratic. Confusing diplomatic signals to Saddam Hussein by U.S. embassy officials prior to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait probably encouraged him in his aggression; but once the invasion occurred, Bush acted wisely and decisively. Bush clearly was surprised by the invasion, which was as much an intelligence failure as a diplomatic mistake. Bush overestimated the threat of Iran and consequently tried too hard to build up Iraq. Up until the last minute Bush hoped to appease Saddam Hussein with conciliatory talk.

Second, the stated reasons for Operation Desert Shield are misleading and confusing. Bush has given a bewildering array of justifications for the U.S. military deployment to the Persian Gulf. Although the president has said all along that the United States did not accept the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait, the initial reason given

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for the military mission of U.S. forces was to deter an Iraqi attack on Saudi Arabia. Now, with 200,000 more troops being rushed to the area to prepare an "offensive option," the military mission has shifted from defense toward offense. One week the president declares, "What is ultimately at stake is far more than a matter of economics or oil. What is at stake is whether the nations of the world can take a common stand against aggression." The next week his Secretary of State says the purpose of the military operation is to protect the American jobs that could be lost in an economic recession caused by oil shortages.

This "reason of the week" approach confuses Americans about the purposes of the Gulf operation. It is particularly misleading to justify Operation Desert Shield as a response to aggression when the U.S. has not responded militarily to acts of aggression elsewhere in the world—for example to Vietnam's occupation of Cambodia, or Syria's takeover of much of Lebanon.

Bush needs to develop a coherent and consistent message if he wishes to get public support for a military operation. Instead of raising spurious analogies between Saddam Hussein and Adolf Hitler, or drawing a line in the sand against Iraq because Americans are "standing up for their principles," Bush should be honest and direct and say that America cannot afford to let a man like Saddam Hussein sit on the world's oil lifeline, nor threaten U.S. and allied interests with chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons of mass destruction. These alone are sufficient reasons to drive Iraq out of Kuwait.

Third, Operation Desert Shield's long-range goals are unclear. Secretary of State James Baker's proposal of a permanent security framework in the Arab world has raised more questions than it has answered. How could an alliance permanently involving U.S. forces in the Persian Gulf be placed on a stable basis so long as the Arab–Israeli conflict is unresolved and the status of Iran remains uncertain? Why would the United States want to be tied down to a permanent deployment of forces in the Middle East anyway?

Additional questions are raised by the president's emphasis on United Nations sanctions for U.S. military action. Will America now have to seek multilateral approval before we protect our interests?

The aims of Operation Desert Shield should be to protect Western access to Persian Gulf oil, to destroy Saddam Hussein's potential for building weapons of mass destruction, and to restore a balance of power to the region by cutting Iraq down to size. Once this is done, U.S. ground forces should leave the Persian Gulf.

Prudent Insider

At first blush Bush's foreign policy appears to be a hodgepodge of contradictions. He is passive with the Soviet Union, but downright aggressive in Panama and the Persian Gulf. He shows bewilderment with respect to Russia, but he makes some highly intelligent moves toward Mexico and Latin America. He appeases Saddam Hussein with friendly overtures up to the moment of Hussein's invasion of Kuwait, and then turns on him with a vengeance, leading a grand international coalition against him.

These policies are not really contradictory, although their consequences may be. Behind them are a set of beliefs and habits developed over the years as a Washington insider and as a politician who fights only when forced to do so. Cautious and prudent, he is at his best as a defender of the international status quo and as a leader of a coalition. But while this preference for stability works well in Asia and Latin America, it has created a policy vacuum in the Soviet Union and Europe where revolutionary changes are taking place.

Bush has pushed for reform in China and Japan without causing them to withdraw from peaceful discussion with the world.

Presidents have been challenged before to articulate basic goals and strategies in times of tremendous international change. Harry Truman and Dwight Eisenhower rose to the occasion at the beginning of the Cold War when they developed and expanded the policy of containment. George Bush must similarly craft a coherent and consistent strategy as America enters a new age.

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Field of Dreams

Organic Agriculture Doesn't Pay the Seed Bills

Blake Hurst

On top of cutworms, cinch bugs, weeds, droughts, floods, and bureaucrats, we farmers seem to be afflicted with more than our fair share of experts.

The farm press in the early '80s was full of people recommending the cultivation of shiitake mushrooms and other exotic solutions to our financial woes. Now, I'm sure there is a market for shiitake mushrooms, but they could hardly solve a problem caused by $75 billion of excess debt. Then we were blessed with pictures of Jesse Jackson in overalls, Willie Nelson singing for Farm Aid, and Jessica Lange portraying a farm wife fighting for her farm. I would buy a ticket to watch Ms. Lange read the dictionary, but her congressional testimony about farmers' problems hardly marked a high point in the public discourse.

The '90s didn't seem to be getting any better when some of these experts joined forces with environmentalists and began trying to farm from a ballot box. Fortunately, the voters exhibited some good practical horse sense this fall when they overwhelmingly voted down California's Big Green initiative, which would have banned most commercial fertilizers and pesticides. In Texas, citizens ousted Commissioner of Agriculture Jim Hightower. Seems that they weren't so enthralled with Hightower's agenda promoting "enlightened," or organic, farming. I've looked into organic agriculture and the good people of Texas and California are right, it's just too impractical and expensive.

No Return on Labor

When the experts first began talking about something called LISA (Low-Input Sustainable Agriculture), I was a tad slow to believe. But then a guest on the Phil Donahue show mentioned a book called *Alternative Agriculture* and I started to listen. The book, written by the National Research Council (NRC), an arm of the National Academy of Sciences, claimed that "the productivity of farmers that don't use pesticides is just as great as those that do." Since we use about $100,000 worth of pesticides, herbicides, and commercial fertilizers a year on our farm here in Missouri, I hoped that this time the experts were right, and we could save some money.

The NRC's book received wide play in the national media. The *New York Times* ran a glowing article on its front page. Senator Wyche Fowler and other legislators have spoken highly of the report. I decided to take a look myself.

The book presents 11 case studies of supposedly successful farmers who use very few pesticides or commercial fertilizers. I focused on the five cases most similar to my own. Unfortunately, the authors provided no information to document the superior financial performance of the farms involved. Confronting statements such as "Data were not available for detailed analysis of the farmer's financial performance," or "Any assessment of the financial performance of the Kutztown Farm is complicated by a lack of comparable data for conventional farms," I was unable to learn how to save $100,000. So I tried to call the farmers in the book to ask directly about the economic viability of their farms.

One of the farmers' names was not given in order to protect his privacy. A farm in Virginia included in the study is no longer in business, the farmer evidently concluding that selling one's farm to be made into a subdivision is the most profitable alternative crop of all. The other three farmers were more than willing to visit with me, and their comments were revealing. One of the three does profit from alternative agriculture, since he receives research funds from pressure groups favoring

I'm proud to be a farmer, and I genuinely enjoy most of my 60-hour weeks. But I'm still not willing to do this work for free.

Blake Hurst *works 2,800 acres with his brothers on the family farm in Tarkio, Missouri.*

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We make less money per corn acre than organic farmers. But our higher acreage makes up for our lower profits per acre.

low-input farming, and also is much in demand as a well-paid public speaker.

Only one of the farmers would divulge his income to me. In the past two years, his return to both capital and labor has averaged $20,000 per annum. After a return to his capital is subtracted, he receives almost nothing for his labor. The other farmers were unwilling to disclose their incomes, but they did disclose their costs of production—about $210 for an acre of corn, versus around $230 an acre on my farm, not including the costs of management. One of the farmers I talked to budgeted a return of $330 per acre for his corn crop. So, he receives a return of $120 per acre, while I must be satisfied with $100 per acre in a good year. The trouble is, he can till only 300 acres with approximately two full-time men. At Hurst Farms, my two brothers, my dad, and I farm 10 times as much land. Our higher acreage more than makes up for our lower profits per acre.

Herbicides free us from incredibly labor-intensive work looking at the business end of a hoe. Mechanical cultivation, whether with a hoe or a cultivator, is the only way to control weeds without chemicals. If it rains when the fields should be cultivated, the weeds will literally swallow a crop. The farmer who doesn't use herbicides is therefore confined to the land he can cultivate two or three times in the very short period the weather allows. In our case, low-input farming would mean a sharp drop in acreage and a sharp drop in income.

Blue Legume

As for fertilizer, one of the NRC farmers I talked to used municipal sludge to satisfy his nitrogen requirements. I can't get sludge in Tarkio, Missouri, and if I could, I'm not sure I'd want it: sludge often contains heavy metals and other contaminants that may well be more harmful to the environment than commercial fertilizers. The other farmers in the study used manure or legumes (in this case, hay crops), which fix nitrogen from the air, to provide nitrogen for next year's corn crop. There are a lot of problems that come with using manure. First of all, you have to have a source—usually cattle. Now, I hate cows. They're messy and they're hard to keep out of the corn. We have a few cows around the farm to graze fields that are too steep to farm, and as far as I'm concerned, they are a necessary evil. Second, manure can only supply at most 10 percent of the nitrogen a corn crop needs.

Legumes can bring their own set of problems. Several months ago, we planted half of a field to sweet clover, a nitrogen-producing legume. We let it grow back the next

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year in order to receive the maximum benefit from the nitrogen produced. The rest of the field was fertilized normally with commercial fertilizer. The corn fertilized with purchased nitrogen turned out fine, but we lost about half of our corn following clover. It seems our clover had done an efficient job of collecting black cutworm moths during their annual trek northward. Showing no environmental sensitivity whatsoever, the cutworm moths had turned into cutworms, and were happily munching their way through our cornfield. Not only was our foray into alternative agriculture economically disastrous, but it was of little help to the environment, since we were forced to apply an insecticide as a rescue treatment.

Herbicides free us from incredibly labor-intensive work looking at the business end of a hoe.

Most of the farmers in the study had farms in the northern and eastern parts of the Corn Belt. That was no surprise to those of us in the drier western Corn Belt. Plowing down legumes may work where rain is both predictable and plentiful. Here in Missouri, we're not that fortunate. My next-door neighbor plowed down a legume before planting corn last year. Although the season was abnormally dry, we did raise some corn—all of us except my neighbor, who destroyed his corn in August because it had already died. The legume had used all of the available moisture, and his corn crop never had a chance.

Corn of Plenty

It's astonishing to me that people can seriously recommend turning back the clock on almost all the technological advances that farmers have made. I was surprised that one of the farmers in the study harvests his corn in the ear with an old-fashioned corn picker, instead of a modern combine. Corn pickers are slowpokes that have been outdated for about 20 years. The all-time record with one at Hurst Farms is 1,200 bushels of corn picked in one day. With a combine we now routinely shell 5,000 or 6,000 bushels a day.

When I was 13, I spent a summer shelling ear corn that had been harvested with a corn picker and loading it on trucks. The corn was stored in wooden cribs, complete with raccoons, rats, and blue eye, a mold endemic to corn stored in the ear. Five of us worked for a month, 60 hours a week, to handle the same amount of corn that my brothers and I can handle in a week with today's machinery. It will take more than one book to convince me to buy a corn picker.

The critics of modern farming methods repeatedly make a distinction between natural and synthetic that I find disingenuous. "Organic" methods of farming permit the use of arsenic but disallow malathion, a chemical that a California agriculture official drank out of a glass in order to prove its safety. I recently received an advertisement from an organic farming catalog offering bone meal at a price some 20 times higher than what I normally pay for phosphorus. But if I apply more bone meal than my corn crop needs, then the environment will suffer in exactly the same manner as if I apply too much commercial fertilizer.

The NRC is a strong advocate of applying manure in place of commercial fertilizers. But where nitrates were found in the water here in Missouri, they could almost always be traced to contamination by livestock. Used improperly, natural substances can be just as harmful to the environment as synthetic compounds. Used carefully, man-made chemicals can be perfectly safe.

Hay Seeds

Research into alternative agriculture could lead to some payoffs for farmers and consumers as well as the environment. Pioneer Seed Company has announced that it is within 10 years of marketing a seed corn that fixes its own nitrogen, thereby ending the need for commercial nitrogen. Field crops are being developed that are tolerant of Roundup, an herbicide that even the NRC finds benign. Corn plants that secrete toxins that control pests are being developed through biotechnology. A small company has recently begun marketing a machine that tests the soil for nitrogen as the farmer drives through the field, allowing the farmer to apply exactly the right amount of nitrogen to each and every part of the field.

For the moment, though, alternative agriculture makes sense only when the opportunity cost of the farmer's labor is not considered. I'm proud to be a farmer, and I genuinely enjoy most of my 60-hour weeks. But I'm still not willing to do this work for free. ☎

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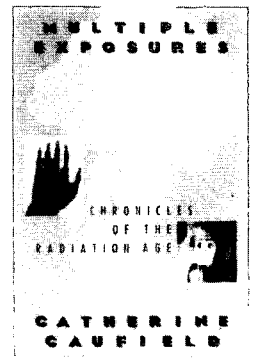

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Biblical Standard of Justice

Dear Sir:

I read Marvin Olasky's article, "Beyond the Stingy Welfare State: What We Can Learn from the Compassion of the 19th Century" (Fall 1990), with great interest. It is brilliant. One must concede that the reformers of the 19th century demonstrated a much more godly charity than what is called charity today.

"Well-meaning, tender-hearted, sweet-voiced criminals" are precisely those whom I observe to be running our 20th-century welfare system. As Mr. Olasky points out, the number of homeless is skyrocketing, the urban poor are able to make a decent living from welfare services and soup kitchens, and illegitimate child-bearing is a national industry. Why? Because the modern welfare state has made it profitable. And *that* is criminal.

Mr. Olasky's seven principles go right to the core of the biblical standard of justice. That justice is both vertical—having to do with man's responsibilities to God—and horizontal—demanding that human beings be responsible for one another. Modern notions about "mercy" and "justice," when divorced from transcendent reality, tend to rape these godly attributes of their inherent meaning. People and social structures are to be in conformity with the standards of a just and holy God. "Social covenant," if it is to have merit, is embedded in *divine* covenant.

Consequently, the mercy that we extend to others must emulate that which God extends to us. God continues to demand righteousness from us while He freely enables us to be righteous. In the same way, genuine human mercy ought to demand responsibility, while at the same time enabling the recipients of mercy to act responsibly.

My own work has been in the field of criminal justice. It strikes me that criminal justice reform and welfare reform are related. Both deal with those people who, for one reason or another, have been unable to live up to society's rules and expectations. Accordingly, they either break the rules or opt out. They become, whether willingly or unwillingly, wards of the state.

Substantive Change

The truly merciful—and long-sighted—approach to reform is to offer substantive change and viable training for these people, while holding them accountable for their own livelihood or criminal acts.

Five of Mr. Olasky's seven principles get to the heart of that need for transformation and training: affiliation, bonding, employment, freedom, and God. Those five principles parallel those of Prison Fellowship's ministry to prisoners. Marriage seminars and family ministry are aimed at preserving a strong family unit to which the inmate may return upon release. One-on-one mentoring keeps the inmate accountable and affords him a model of Christian living. Restitution programs require inmates to accept personal responsibility for the damage their crime has caused in another's life. After-care programs are aimed at helping the former inmate to find a responsible place in society. Most important, all of this is predicated on the knowledge that lives will be changed only when God changes hearts.

It works in the prisons. And as Mr. Olasky so convincingly demonstrates, it worked in the cities and streets of a century ago.

Well done, Marvin Olasky. Would that our policymakers heed your call for reform.

Charles Colson
Prison Fellowship Ministries
Washington, DC

Generosity of Wrong Sort

Dear Sir:

Marvin Olasky's insightful description of America's entitlement system reminds me of my childhood when I would stop in front of the pet shop window to watch the chipmunks run in place on their spinning wheels. When I was very young, I was entertained, but by my tenth year I was distressed by this constant misuse of life and energy.

There are still agencies that follow the principles Mr. Olasky has found in the 19th century. Goodwill Industries was conceived in the 1880s and incorporated formally at the turn of the century to provide a system of converting donated materials to useful paid work. The system is supervised by caring people and leads to employment and personal independence. In 1989, we earned revenues of $625 million and provided services to more than 100,000 people. So the principles of work leading to independence are

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still sound, and I wish Mr. Olasky had come to Goodwill's door, where he'd have been given a work test, rather than a piece of pie.

Bad Welfare Drives Out Good Charity

Our major problem is neither financial nor spiritual. It is the recruitment of enough clients who are willing to risk the loss of unearned benefits by accepting paid employment. The regulatory processes of Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), welfare, and various Social Security programs prevent even the most committed volunteers or organizational service providers from bonding with individuals who have no role models involved in productive labor and little motivation to strive for upward social or economic mobility. The problem is aggravated by the keepers of various private social service agencies, which, with a combination of government grants and donated funds, make the status quo seem more bearable than the unknown challenges of independence. The price of administering these maintenance programs is not merely measured in present dollars and present lives. Each year we put another class of Americans into the cage of welfare to spin useless wheels, while the national debt grows and jobs go unfilled.

Proposals of long-term solutions are often defeated by the cry of "Yes, but they are hungry today." The creative process ends with a full dinner plate by nightfall.

Mr. Olasky argues that the welfare state is stingy. I suggest, rather, that it is long on generosity of the wrong sort. Maintenance has been substituted for mobility, and system results are measured by the numbers being served, rather than the numbers being severed. Until that is changed, no amount of love or money will bring about the full employment necessary for the health of our national economy and lives free of the chipmunk cage for our citizens with special needs.

David M. Cooney
Rear Admiral, USN (Ret.)
President and
Chief Executive Officer
Goodwill Industries of America
Bethesda, MD

More Than Charity Needed

Dear Sir:

Reading Marvin Olasky's interesting article on charity in the 19th century, I found much I could applaud. Mr. Olasky's advocacy for a return to basic Judeo-Christian values and an increased commitment to private charity is timely and an excellent reminder of the great American tradition of caring for those less fortunate than ourselves.

Olasky strikes at the heart of the problem we as a nation face today when he asserts that "only a richness of spirit can battle a poverty of soul." Adequate employment, job training, education, housing, nutrition, and health care, while all indispensable, will not by themselves address the

chronic, almost intractable poverty we confront today. Only a deep commitment to developing the whole person—body and spirit—will.

But perhaps we are not as far away from some of these values as Mr. Olasky thinks. Mr. Olasky's description of 19th-century charity workers reminds me very much of the volunteers I work with every day at Covenant House: tough-minded, compassionate, value-driven, faithful, and committed to giving their time and effort to help turn around young lives.

Importance of Values

Kids come to Covenant House directly from the street. They desperately need a place to sleep, a warm meal, a shower, and clean clothes. They get that immediately. But they need so much more. They need a set of values completely at variance from those that reign on the street. They need to be challenged to take control of their lives, to see their potential. They need, more than anything else, a person who will care about them deeply, individually. That is exactly what our staff, volunteers, and mentors do. These great people respect the kids absolutely so the kids will begin to respect themselves.

The people who work at Covenant House demonstrate every day that even the poorest, most down-and-out child is God's child first. By their example and care they show these young people that God loves them. We strive to show our youngsters that they are not "predestined" to remain permanent outsiders, but that they can, they must, be part of a family, a community, a nation, because, after all, they are part of God's creation. The power of meeting both the physical and spiritual needs of these young people cannot be underestimated.

Poverty not only disadvantages those it grips economically. It disconnects them from the common moral threads that bind our society. We confront, gently but firmly, our young people with the reality that they must make a choice. They must choose values that will bring them into the mainstream. Ultimately, no one can do that for them.

Values alone will not eliminate the harsh realities of poverty and homelessness for our youth in the 1990s, however. Most of the youngsters we see are victims of families that disintegrated around them. They are confronted daily by the reality that they can find easier employment opportunities in the drug world than in an information age they can barely grasp. The deprivation these children have experienced is truly formidable, as daunting as anything I have faced in over 40 years of caring for them.

Once their basic needs are met, our young people need education, training, and a job. As formidable as the challenge is, every day the young men and women in our Rights of Passage program work, learn, and care for their own children if they have them. I can't begin to tell you how proud we are of them. After a year or so in our program, over 70 percent of them hold jobs that pay $7 or more an hour. Most have earned their high school equivalency diploma and are ready to find

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housing on their own or with a friend. In short, they have begun to make a contribution to our communities and our society.

Danger of Categorization

There is one 19th-century idea that Mr. Olasky describes, however, that I have found one must be very careful about: categorization can lead all too easily to stereotypes. All of the kids we work with need help—some more than others. It is one of the great skills of our staff and volunteers to differentiate among those needs and respond to each youngster individually. That is why we adhere most firmly to our policy of "open intake." We set no criteria at the door for those youngsters we don't know. Our first goal is to get them off the street, every one of them. Then we do our best to sort out their needs and assist as many of them as we can.

Mr. Olasky's article has stimulated me, as the new president of Covenant House, to critically reexamine our basic values—and to go back to them. Those basic values are what brought Covenant House and other private charities into existence in the first place. I have never been more mindful of that essential reality than I am today.

Each age makes a contribution. Perhaps our great challenge is to integrate the 19th-century values of private charity with the impressive contribution of 20th-century public welfare. I am convinced that finding the proper balance between private and public assistance for the poor and most vulnerable of our society—our children—is the best way to prepare for the challenges of the 21st century.

Sister Mary Rose McGeady
President
Covenant House
New York, NY

Personal Causes of Poverty

Dear Sir:

The strength of Marvin Olasky's argument is to emphasize the personal dimension of helping the poor. Secure relationships with others are indeed the main thing the seriously poor lack. The old charity certainly did more to restore these ties than today's impersonal social programs. It has always been costlier in human terms to maintain relationships with specific poor people than just to give them money. The old charity workers thus really were more generous than today's well-meaning citizens, who may give money to the homeless but usually would be appalled to know any by name.

I would also agree that much could be done to bring this personal dimension back into social policy. This is what today's "workfare" programs are all about. They enforce a work obligation, but they also build relationships between nonworking welfare recipients and the wider world. It is these ties—to staff and other clients as well as to employers—that ultimately pull recipients back into workaday society. Recent proposals to reform schools and law enforcement do much the same. They raise standards, but they also restore personal links within poor society and between it and public authorities.

I do think that Mr. Olasky may exaggerate the effectiveness of the old charity. We do not have rigorous evaluations to tell us whether charity agencies were effective, as we do for some recent programs. Many of the recoveries from poverty they claimed to achieve might have occurred without them, simply because many people move into and out of poverty for brief periods. In that era, transient poverty was even more widespread than it is today. Then, most poor adults worked, as they do not today, so poverty was much more responsive to the ups and downs of the economy.

Mr. Olasky also downplays the role of the material in overcoming poverty. A century ago, only a minority of the adult poor had the serious personal problems that we today associate with poverty. Most of them simply could not make enough money. While the solutions often were personal and moral, we also know in retrospect that the greater answer was economic growth. Higher real wages from a free economy did more to reduce need than charity, or government, ever could. Secondarily, middle-class benefits such as Social Security have been vital for reducing need among the retired and disabled.

For this reason, the charity doctrines are actually more valid today than they were in 1890. Today, long-term poverty usually does have personal causes, as those who work regularly, at any job, are seldom poor. So enforcing work and restoring relationships and hope should be even more central to social policy today than earlier.

What Government Can Do

Mr. Olasky suggests that government programs are inherently unable to meet these personal and spiritual needs. I doubt that. A number of public institutions—effective schools, the military, the few effective antipoverty programs, as well as workfare—have shown that they can restore meaning to disordered lives. They do this by providing a combination of support and legitimate demands for performance.

The problem, rather, is that public *and* private programs have

Adequate employment, job training, education, housing, nutrition, and health care, while all indispensable, will not by themselves address the chronic, almost intractable poverty we confront today. Only a deep commitment to developing the whole person—body and spirit—will.
—Sister Mary Rose McGeady

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become infected with the entitlement ethos peculiar to contemporary culture. Mr. Olasky mentions the ways advocates of the Social Gospel attributed poverty to material conditions. Today's liberal social analysts go even further, blaming the most personal dysfunctions on a hostile environment. This exemptive spirit is the problem, rather than the fact that programs are public. In the Progressive era, even government programs were demanding where they existed, while in ours, even church-run programs, as Mr. Olasky admits, are often permissive.

The answer, thus, is a conversion of culture that would affect both the public and private sectors. We need, collectively, to remember that dignity requires competence, and that the Bible is much less indulgent toward the poor than today's churchmen say it is. Confronted with the paralytic at the Pool of Bethesda (John 5), Jesus did not scramble to help him into the water. He asked if he wanted to be healed. And He said, "Stand up!"

Lawrence M. Mead
Associate Professor of Politics
New York University
New York, NY

Philanthropy and Lower Crime Rates

Dear Sir:

Marvin Olasky's "Beyond the Stingy Welfare State" was splendid. The story of private charity in the 19th century is a classic instance of an entire society—ours—forgetting a success story that was once common knowledge. In many ways, Britain offers an even better-documented example of Mr. Olasky's thesis. The same principles of philanthropy applied, and the British tackled poverty with the same energy. In doing so, the British movement surely contributed to an otherwise inexplicable social phenomenon: during a period of rapid modernization, urbanization, and social dislocation from the mid-19th century through World War I, Britain experienced a steadily declining crime rate.

Charles Murray
American Enterprise Institute
Washington, DC

The Role of the State

Dear Sir:

In one respect, Marvin Olasky is right. Nineteenth-century responses to poverty and dependence rested on principles very different from those that underlie contemporary welfare policies. But my research on statistics and detailed case histories shows he is wrong to argue that they offer a guide for the present.

No 19th-century groups waged war against poverty. They tried to help poor people survive, not to move them out of poverty. Social policy and philanthropy rested on

assumptions of scarcity: resources were too limited to end poverty. Moreover, generosity was dangerous because relief (an earlier period's word for welfare) eroded the will to work. For this reason, relief should always amount to less than prevailing wages, and destitute people requesting relief should be herded into poorhouses, not helped in their homes. Except in a few places, this policy never worked as planned. Many more destitute people remained outside the filthy, unhealthful, wretched poorhouses erected throughout the country in the early 19th century than entered them.

Very few recipients of 19th-century charity climbed out of dependence. Most lived a precarious life alternating between periods of modest self-sufficiency and destitution. The reasons were straightforward: low wages made saving impossible; work remained irregular because of both seasonal factors and shifts in business conditions; women's wages, at most half those of men, could not support a family; and illness frequently left families with no income.

Charities and Child Labor

One of the most common routes out of dependence was on the backs of children. Charities insisted that parents yank children out of school at the earliest possible moment and send them to work for miserable wages. In early 20th-century New York City, 14-year-old boys and girls usually started work for about $3 or $4 a week. In those years, an employed unskilled or semi-skilled laborer could expect to earn about $2 per day. (Families found it almost impossible to survive on less than $10 to $15 each week, and that amount represented bare subsistence.)

Despite reform rhetoric about the desirability of foster care, the number of children in orphanages exploded at the turn of the century. During the 1890s, public and private groups across the country founded at least 247 institutions for children. Between 1886 and 1909, the annual average number founded was 22. Only a small proportion of dependent children lived in a setting remotely resembling a family.

Paid agents, not volunteers, did most of the work of charity organization societies. The friendly visitor was their emblem, not their practice. They could never find nearly enough of them.

Charity agents subjected clients to a detailed, intrusive, public scrutiny. They gathered information from every available source: previous landlords and janitors, neighbors, relatives, employers, and merchants. As a result, very few clients bonded with charity agents and visitors, who demanded gratitude and deference as the price of relief. More often, clients resented and feared their investigations and the power they held over their survival.

Woodyards paid only about a half

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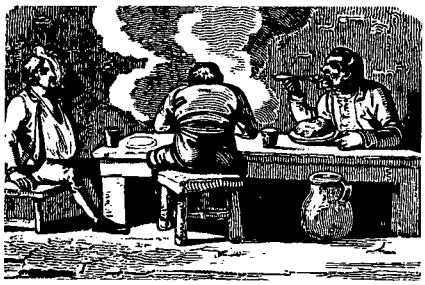
or a third of prevailing wages. Laundry and sewing rooms for women paid even less. Woodyards taught no skills and carried a stigma, which men resented. Charity agents often sent men to them without regard for their health or capacity for hard physical labor.

Contrary to their claims, charity organization societies often gave aid without requiring work. They called it emergency assistance, and it took the form of small amounts of cash, clothing, fuel, or groceries sent in to prevent death from starvation or cold.

The small amounts of aid given were too low to permit survival without additional help garnered



from friends, multiple agencies, odd jobs, or relatives. This forced clients to "cheat," a practice charity workers accepted as long as it did not seem excessive.

Government Spent More

Even in the 19th and early 20th centuries, governments spent more than private charities to relieve dependence. Governments also supported children in orphanages and reform schools, as well as other dependent persons in poorhouses, and spent relatively large amounts on free medical care through dispensaries and hospitals (including mental hospitals). In New York State in 1900 the state institutions supported 8,494 people, and state almshouses, 73,117. Private societies aided 30,560 people with outdoor relief, compared with 209,092 given temporary, or outdoor, relief by almshouses. These figures do not include the very considerable state contributions to medical care.

Government assistance helped poor people achieve a sense of personal independence more effectively than any other source. In the 19th and early 20th centuries, Civil War pensions often served this purpose. After the 1910s, so did the new mothers' pensions enacted by most states.

Nineteenth-century charity gave aid to only a small number of the needy; provided meager, inadequate relief; humiliated its clients; and did little to relieve their suffering. Its principal lesson is the key role of the state in the relief and prevention of human misery.

Michael Katz
Professor of History
University of Pennsylvania
Philadelphia, PA

A New Middle Class

Dear Sir:

Marvin Olasky is certainly right to help us rediscover the social welfare system of the 19th and early 20th centuries, which have been too long dismissed as a kind of malevolent pre-history happily replaced once the New Deal and the Social Security Act took hold. Mr. Olasky's emphasis on private charity's passion for uplift and improvement happily contrasts with what has been received wisdom purveyed by historians such as Michael Katz (*In the Shadow of the Poorhouse*) and Frances Fox Piven and Richard A. Cloward (*Regulating the Poor*), which saw the pre-welfare state not only as uncompassionate but as bent on keeping the labor force quiescent.

That said, it does strike me that Mr. Olasky does not distinguish between two types of tasks that private charities (as well as the limited local public welfare of the era) were performing. These organizations were providing food, lodging, and relief not only for those who were not and had never been part of the work force but for those who were caught in the adjustments required by the business cycle and technological change. It is not the welfare entitlement system that has evolved to help those thrown out of work despite good habits and an eagerness for jobs. Rather, we have developed the social insurance system—unemployment compensation, old age pensions, etc.—for such people.

Mr. Olasky's real interest would seem to lie in the question of what to do about lower-class behavior, in Edward Banfield's use of the term. How do we deal with the narrowly present-oriented and, particularly, their children? This has been our great difficulty historically. In approaching this task Mr. Olasky asks whether the public assistance system should be privatized; whether more use should be made of volunteers in either a private or public system; and whether a private system would be able to impose more constructive but more demanding conditions of assistance. The answers do not seem self-evident. It is not clear that, given the political will, greater demands cannot be made on recipients of a public welfare system; indeed this has slowly been happening. Nor is it clear that an army of private volunteers awaits to serve.

"Child Saving"

I strongly agree with Mr. Olasky, however, that there has been a diminution of contact between the classes since the heyday of private charity. I suspect affluent volunteers might be most easily recruited for the task of what the Victorians called "child-saving." It may be that the habits of many lower-class adults (long-term welfare recipients) are not generally amenable to change and that society will nonetheless show little appetite for cutting off all public assistance to such persons, especially those with children.

It may then be more productive to attempt, in the fashion Mr. Olasky suggests, to inculcate middle-class values in poor children, who were the special focus of a turn-of-the-century institution of uplift that Mr. Olasky overlooks: the settlement house, which had no involvement in relief at all. Even without wholesale change in the welfare system, the development of new, privately financed, neighborhood-based volunteer organizations (either in freestanding community centers or in schools) that could expand the horizons of the children of the poor would be significant.

A child whose talents are appreciated and encouraged, who is told of the value of work habits and the potential for advancement, will approach life differently than one who meets no one delivering such a message. The personal involvement of volunteers in undertaking that task has, indeed, been lost as we have confused the legitimate help owed

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to those caught up in economic change with the guidance we owe to those not conversant with middle-class values.

Howard Husock
Director of the Case Program
Kennedy School of Government
Harvard University
Cambridge, MA

A Helping Handout

Dear Sir:

Marvin Olasky's critique of existing government programs for the poor is premised on three observations. The first is "the frustrating solidity of American poverty...as multigenerational welfare dependency has become common." The second is that "the rest of us" have withdrawn what "the destitute need most—love, time, and a challenge." The third is that the current array of government programs has abandoned 19th-century principles of charitable activity.

As Mr. Olasky acknowledges, the heroes of a century ago did not eliminate poverty either. "But," he says, they "saw movement and hope." Of late, particularly since the Reagan juggernaut of 1981, the poverty rate has been increasing. Indeed, the term "homelessness" did not even enter the popular vocabulary until the mid-1980s. Pessimism accurately describes the current mood.

With Mr. Olasky's second observation, I can but heartily agree. Mr. Olasky is entirely correct in his insistence on direct human involvement with the poor. The experience of 70 years of Mennonite voluntarism confirms the words of Jacob Riis: "The poor and the well-to-do [must] be brought closer together, in an everyday companionship that cannot but be productive of the best results, to the one who gives no less than to the one who receives."

Mr. Olasky's third assertion, however, is only partially accurate. Public welfare programs have, over the past 15 years, placed increased emphasis on parental responsibility. In states willing to commit adequate funding, there is a renewed commitment to lower caseloads and the relational dynamic of effective casework. Categorical eligibility requirements, rigorous attempts to uncover fraud and deception, work searches, and participation in employment and training programs have for years been the predominant themes of existing welfare programs. It is indeed true that the spiritual has been largely eliminated from public charitable programs, and that most charity work has become impersonal. The poor, and the well-to-do, have suffered for it. As Mr. Olasky puts it, "there is only so much that public policy can do....[O]nly a richness of spirit can battle a poverty of soul."

Welfare Successes

Mr. Olasky fails to note that our modern entitlement programs have been very successful in reducing destitution among the elderly and disabled. They have guarded countless children from malnutrition and disease. They have served as a bridge for millions of families during periods of deprivation due to illness and unemployment. Multigenerational poverty is a serious problem, but it remains the smaller part of welfare caseloads. And should not people be reminded, when they evoke that peculiar American prejudice against government assistance programs, that by far the largest share of the welfare dollar goes for health and custodial care for the sick and elderly?

Mr. Olasky's understanding of the Scripture's call for personal compassion needs to be thundered from every pulpit and lectern in this country. The chronically poor do need "love, time, and a challenge" mediated through the personal involvement of compassionate people. But never can we put personal compassion in opposition to a government-funded response. Government assistance programs are an essential supplement to our duty to the widow and orphan. Trashing welfare programs is not a step toward the opening of our hearts and homes to the poor.

Berry Friesen
Director
U.S. Service Program
Mennonite Central Committee
Akron, PA

Work Not Enough

Dear Sir:

Marvin Olasky seems unaware that religious organizations continue to be major sources of help, guidance, and support for people struggling to make their way in a society that has little room for the poor. The religious community has not abandoned its traditional caregiving role, although it plays it differently. For example, religious organizations provide huge amounts of food and shelter for the homeless and hungry. Churches are the nation's major source of center-based child-care. Head Start is in thousands of churches, as are tutoring and literacy programs for children and adults.

Too Busy to Care

Times have changed considerably since the 19th century. The program Mr. Olasky advocates relies on volunteers who could give many hours of their time to assisting a person or family through a crisis or on a long-term basis. The concept of "bonding" that he describes requires a major investment by an individual in another individual. Many church

One of the most common routes out of dependence was on the backs of children. Charities insisted that parents yank children out of school at the earliest possible moment and send them to work for miserable wages.

—Michael Katz

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people still do that; but most people simply do not have the time.

The volunteers of the 19th century were often retired or wealthy people who did not need to work full-time, or women who did not have jobs outside the home. Now, however, most women are employed and people are working later into their old age. Taking care of their own families and being responsible to their jobs prevents them from devoting significant time to charitable work.

Largely for this reason responsibility for caring for the poor has devolved onto the government. State and local governments are the obvious channel for federal funds because they can hire people to do the work of assisting the poor that was once done by volunteers.

Very often in helping low-income people the government elects to work through non-profit and religious organizations. For example, the Emergency Food and Shelter National Board Program is funded by Congress through the McKinney Homeless Assistance Act but carried out at the state and local levels by non-profit (mostly religious) organizations. This program shelters and feeds hundreds of thousands of needy people each year.

Supportive Services Needed

Certainly people who can work should do so, but there is a big difference between "working" and being "self-supporting." Mr. Olasky fails to recognize that a large portion of the people who live below the poverty line in the U.S. (including many of the homeless) *are* employed. They work when they are able to—or when they can find jobs—but they either cannot make enough to support themselves and their families or they have extraordinary expenses that cause their incomes to be inadequate.

I agree with Mr. Olasky's statement that "The major flaw of the modern welfare state is not that it is extravagant, but that it is too stingy." It is too stingy:

- to create a child-care program so low-income parents can work knowing their children are safe;
- to provide adequate basic education and job training for people whose innate skills are insufficient to help them earn a living;
- to provide basic health care for all workers and their families; and
- to provide enough low-cost housing that every family can have a decent roof over its head, with heat, light, and clean water.

If people in this society believed that working meant that they would have these things, we would have no problem with people not wanting to work. The problem would be meeting the demand for jobs. But the way the economy operates now, a responsible and faithful worker—even in a full-time job—has no guarantee of being self-supporting; and that is the whole point of getting off welfare.

Mary Anderson Cooper
Acting Director
National Council of the
Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.
Washington, DC

A Necessary Evil

Dear Sir:

I doubt that today's religious institutions would want or be able to lead a reform of the nation's welfare system, as Marvin Olasky proposes. Most churches have long since rendered the problem of poverty unto Caesar and gone on to solving more tractable problems, like how to achieve world peace. Their most visible contribution to welfare is demands that government provide more of it.

And how would we keep an anti-poverty war run by Big Church from being a worse disaster than the one now run by Big Government? Over the years various churches have treated poverty as everything from a mortal sin to a state of grace; imagine them trying to agree upon and apply a common moral standard to such welfare-culture problems as teen-age pregnancy, family breakup or non-formation, lack of educational achievement, and reluctance to conform to a work ethic. An Ecumenical Welfare System Design Conference would be even more fun to watch than a Constitutional Convention, but I'd hate to have to implement its poverty war plan.

Mr. Olasky sees poverty in the United States as a condition of moral or spiritual deprivation; I see it as a defining characteristic of our economic and political system. Without poverty there would be no way to define wealth, and without both wealth and poverty there would be no way to define a middle class—which many believe to be the Western world's most significant contribution to civilized society. Like it or not, we must either learn to live with our self-defined poverty or try to abolish class. Does anyone want another dose of Marxism?

I don't. I would rather see us wage war against a real and beatable enemy: the unnecessary economic and spiritual dependency induced by a paternalistic welfare system that "helps" low-income people "for their own good," rather than investing in their self-development. Focus on that target, Mr. Olasky; then we can talk about how to imbue welfare with a richness of spirit.

My mother remembered the turn-of-the-century orphan trains that came through her small Nebraska home town, auctioning off poor New York City kids to local farmers. Most of the kids were adopted by good religious families better off financially than my mother's. But she always remembered and pitied them: even as a small child she had recognized that she was free and they were slaves. "As God shows compassion to us, so we must show compassion to others" is a valuable instruction, so long as one adds Lincoln's formula for freedom: "As I would not be a slave, so I would not be a master."

Charles D. Hobbs
Bledsoe, Hobbs, & Associates
Arlington, VA

19th-Century Failures

Dear Sir:

Marvin Olasky correctly notes important features of charitable work in U.S. cities in the post-Civil War decades: the dedication of thousands of volunteers, the emphasis on moral uplift, the close oversight that volunteers maintained over their clients, and the insistence on work in return for charitable aid. All these were characteristic of the so-called Charity Organization movement that

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originated in England and was imported to the United States in the 1870s, and for some time enjoyed a considerable vogue in the major cities.

However, Mr. Olasky misses some key elements in the ideology of this movement, fails to explain the social context of its collapse, and does not adequately represent the position of its critics.

Social Darwinism with a Twist

Mr. Olasky suggests that the leaders of the Charity Organization movement, in their compassion for the poor, rejected the "dog-eat-dog" Social Darwinist ideology of thinkers like Herbert Spencer and William Graham Sumner. In fact, this approach to urban philanthropy was quite compatible with laissez-faire Social Darwinism. As Mr. Olasky himself notes, but does not sufficiently explore, these urban-welfare leaders drew a very sharp distinction between the "worthy poor" and those who were indigent because of their own supposed moral flaws and defects of character. The "worthy" poor, such as the family of a hardworking man temporarily laid up because of an injury at the factory, for example, were the proper objects of short-term aid. As for the "unworthy" poor, however—the lazy, the improvident, the intemperate—the Charity Organization advocates fully agreed with the Social Darwinists that poverty was the result of individual defects of character, and those who exhibited these defects, if they did not alter their habits, must suffer the direst consequences.

A major function of the Charity Organization movement, precisely as the name implies, was to *organize* charitable activity so as to be sure that assistance went only to the "worthy poor," and that the unfit did not prey upon public sympathy and secure charity that would only confirm their slovenly and improvident ways. Thus, the charity organizers issued stern warnings against impulsive benevolence and maintained elaborate centralized records on the poor, which the philanthropically inclined middle or upper classes (and potential employers) were urged to consult, to separate the worthy from the unworthy.

Why did the Charity Organization movement and its stern ideology decline? Mr. Olasky suggests a kind of Gresham's Law of welfare theorizing: the bad drives out the good, as naive and sentimental reformers and Social Gospel ministers in the early 20th century lost sight of the tough-minded realism and hard-bitten practicality of the charity workers of the 1890s.

In reality, the movement collapsed of its own internal contradictions and its increasing irrelevance to social reality. "As the 1890s wore on...," Mr. Olasky tells us, "many well-meaning people were not content with laboring on patiently." In fact, as the 1890s wore on, America reeled under one of the worst depressions in our history. Unemployment rates soared to appallingly high levels, overwhelming the "worthy" and the "unworthy" alike. During the bitter winters of 1893–94 and 1894–95, starvation and homelessness stalked the streets of American cities, as millions of workers and their families literally found themselves in a desperate struggle for survival. In this setting, the confident assurances of the Charity Organization ideologues that they knew the causes and cure of poverty, and that from the vantage point of one's middle-class status one could distinguish absolutely between the "worthy" and the "unworthy" in the ranks of the poor, were exposed for the deceptive half-truths they were.

In the early 20th century, a new generation of social-welfare thinkers and activists—Edward T. Divine, Lawrence Veiller, Florence Kelley, Lillian Wald, and scores of others—mounted a major and comprehensive ideological challenge to the approach and outlook of their predecessors. Mr. Olasky does not do justice to the power of this critique. Perhaps the most cogent of these attacks is found in Jane Addams's *Democracy and Social Ethics* (1902). Addams, founder of the Hull House social settlement in Chicago, offered a devastating analysis of the ideology of the Charity Organization movement for its obsessive focus on the individual and the family as the basic units of social investigation and uplift. This view almost totally neglects the larger social context of urban-industrial poverty: unregulated tenements and public-health conditions in urban America, factories in which workers—including many thousands of children—labored long hours in often dangerous conditions for a pittance, and a capitalist class and a government united in bitterly opposing all efforts to unionize the mass of industrial workers.

Olasky's understanding of the Scripture's call for personal compassion needs to be thundered from every pulpit and lectern in this country.
—Berry Friesen

No Moral High Ground

Addams also criticized the all-pervasive assumption of moral superiority that lay at the heart of this middle-class urban reform and uplift program. She pointed out the irony that many of the Charity Organization volunteers who went into the slums to teach the poor how to manage their budgets were comfortable women of the middle and upper classes who themselves had never had to work a day in their lives. The middle-class volunteers might have something to learn from the poor and their conditions of life, as well as their capacity for spontaneous moral sympathy, she suggested, if only they would open their eyes to the social reality around them, rather than remain blinkered by an excessively individualistic and moralistic ideology.

We can all agree that in many respects current approaches to poverty leave much to be desired.

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But to suggest that we go back to 1890, and recruit battalions of middle-class volunteers who will fan out through the slums passing out Bibles, exhorting the poor to shape up, probing for the moral flaws that prevent them from moving up the ladder, and requiring them to engage in the contemporary equivalents of chopping wood at the local woodyard, is a cruel deception born of historical naïvete and ideological narrowness.

Paul Boyer
Professor of History
University of Wisconsin–Madison
Madison, WI

No Blast to the Past

Dear Sir:

Marvin Olasky raises all sorts of troubling and pertinent issues on both the 19th-century sense of compassion and the 20th-century lack thereof in the treatment of social indigence. Alas, even if we accept the analysis, can it be that, as we enter the 21st century, the choice before us is either a religious-theocratic model or a pluralistic government model? I suspect that neither will really be feasible.

To believe that a Judeo-Christian approach to work and welfare will dissolve the interest-group approach strikes me as a failure to reckon with our host: with a society torn apart at the moral seams, in which the religious groups are also claimants to an interest-group vision of the welfare pie. I suspect that solutions will involve different sorts of social structures, and not simply a return to earlier, benign moral sentiments.

In a world in which equity is a staple diet I find it hard to believe that the notion of charity will carry the same weight that it did in the past. The 19th-century welfare approach assumed notions of inequality no less than of deference to one's betters and hence difference in economic distribution. In the absence of such a valuation base, it seems highly improbable that a return to the past, however pleasant it may be to contemplate in light of the present welfare mess, is likely to occur.

Irving Louis Horowitz
Professor of Sociology and
Political Science
Rutgers University
New Brunswick, NJ

Marvin Olasky replies:

The ruling paradigm concerning anti-poverty efforts a century ago is: not much happened; whatever did happen was the result of governmental effort; and in any case, that was then and this is now, so who cares? I challenge all three of those assumptions.

My research has left me with little sentimentality about 19th-century conditions. The United States, then a much poorer country materially than it is now, faced enormous problems of alcoholism, drug abuse, prostitution, and crime. Most politicians then did not favor income-transfer programs, but even if they had, resources were inadequate. Out of belief and necessity, charity leaders stressed value formation, self-help, and community support. Homeless men were required to take responsibility for themselves and their families. People in need had to turn to relatives, neighbors, and church members.

Records and narratives show that the suffering was real, but so was the success. Mr. Katz cites New York spending in 1900 and generalizes that "governments spent more than private charities to relieve dependence"—but charity leaders a century ago knew that making a person dependent on government was not relieving dependence. Real success was helping a person gain or regain the habit of steady work (perhaps by chopping wood) so that he could get a job and gain independence. The experience of millions of Americans belies Mr. Katz's statement that "low wages made saving impossible." For the most part, those with the desire and self-discipline to work hard and build a better life for their children were able to do so.

Equality of Condition Not the Goal

To understand late 19th-century America, we have to move beyond the 20th-century welfare assumption that equality of result is the goal and expenditure of dollars is the measure of success. Many historians look back a century and see a battle of only two kinds of materialists—Social Darwinists and Social Welfarists. If those are the only two choices, I'd probably join the herd on the Left. Many charity workers a century ago, however, built their efforts on a biblical worldview in which no one is intrinsically worthy and no one is intrinsically unfit. Christian and Jewish charity leaders did not believe they could distinguish absolutely, and that's why they prized a work test that allowed people to show rather than tell. Crucially, however, charity workers were not upset by inequality of result, as long as all had the opportunity to change.

Is their experience at all relevant to our own? Not if we subscribe to the faith that just about everyone must make it, and that if anyone does not, it's the fault of government or society. But the record of 20th-century charity is one of highly touted state programs proving themselves ineffective in the relief and prevention of most human misery, and often causing more. Maybe in 1900 we thought government could do a lot better than the nickel-and-dime charities that emphasized compassionate challenge and witnessed both success and sadness. But, after a century of utopian failure, their small miracles look pretty good.

At the same time, Mr. Mead is correct to note that the problem is not to be solved simply by moving from government to the private sector: "The problem, rather, is that public *and* private programs have become infected with the entitlement ethos." Many types of programs spiral downwards as recipients get used to taking, and givers—many with good intentions—make it easier for some recipients to abandon families and responsibilities. The historical record shows that programs generally need a spiritual base to be successful; I do not want government to discriminate in favor of any religious group, but the record shows that a war on poverty that discriminates against religion will not work.

Our Personal Role

Another major problem is our tendency to think in big public-policy terms rather than in terms of what each of us can do. On this point, it may be that we try to excuse our own large failures by looking at the motes in the eyes of our

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predecessors. The cartoon version of charity workers a century ago is that they were gossipy spies "who demanded gratitude and deference as the price of relief." Some, undoubtedly, were like that, but those at the shelters and agencies I have examined closely were not. Women like Helen Woods of the Chicago Erring Woman's Refuge spent day after day for over 20 years helping teen-agers through crisis pregnancies and other grave difficulties; I do not see arrogance in their writings nor resentment in the letters of those they helped. Rather, Helen Woods and her helpers reprinted and tried to obey the injunction of a popular poem written by Julia Fletcher in 1886: "Forget not thou hast often sinned,/ And sinful yet may be,/ Deal gently with the erring one,/ As God has dealt with thee."

I am not suggesting that we go back to an era of immense problems; I am proposing that we avoid throwing away the much greater resources we have now. It's simply not true that, as a society, we do not have the time to be compassionate. On the average, Americans a century ago had less free time and less room in their houses than we do now. They had longer working or homemaking hours and larger families, and were living far closer to the edge. People who had less materially gave more of themselves; our question today is not whether we have the opportunity, but whether each of us has the will to do a tenth of what Helen Woods did.

Public Choice on "Good" Growth

Dear Sir:

It was not long ago that virtually all environmental policy discussions were cast in terms of economic growth versus the environment. Government was viewed as the sole protector of ecology. This paradigm was shared by Republicans and Democrats alike. Even the Reagan administration, while enacting different governmental policies, was largely influenced by this view and offered no consistent, fundamentally different alternative. However, limitations of this traditional approach are increasingly obvious. It is therefore essential that we incorporate markets and property rights into environmental policy. To that extent, it was refreshing to read William K. Reilly's article "The Green Thumb of Capitalism" (Fall 1990) with its reference to markets, economic growth, and ecological harmony. As Environmental Protection Agency administrator, he is in an important position to develop and test new paradigms. However, I hope this is only the beginning and that Mr. Reilly will push harder, refine his model, and resolve certain ambiguities and internal inconsistencies.

What Are Markets Anyway?

Mr. Reilly's article suffers from ambiguity about just what markets are and how they work. Implicit throughout the article is the assumption that properly "motivated" markets will wisely exercise sufficient knowledge to channel resources and dollars to environmentally desirable goals. This of course rests on the assumption that adequate information will be available to market motivators to enable them to make the right choices. However, information is inherently costly and diffuse, rendering it virtually impossible for these market motivators to make anything close to a consistently informed decision, even if armed with Mr. Reilly's "new realistic measure of national welfare." Markets, on the other hand, deal with information problems very directly through pricing, and reflect the countless decisions consumers and producers make throughout an interdependent economy. By their very nature, markets are not static. In their resilience lies the greatest hope for the kind of technological adaptations that Mr. Reilly applauds.

Mr. Reilly's failure to recognize the information problem is exacerbated exponentially by the failure to address the public choice problems that plague his approach. Simply put, who will decide what is "good growth" as he describes it? Who will reconcile competing environmental, social, and economic concerns while anticipating environmental problems rather than reacting to the crisis of the moment? Is it conceivable that the bureaucratic regulatory and enforcement apparatus necessary for such ecologically directed economic policy would be immune from rent-seeking, budget-maximizing, inefficiency, and coercion? If so, it would be a unique experience in all of public choice scholarship. If not, then it is incumbent upon Mr. Reilly to recognize and address issues that could profoundly affect his proposal.

Forging new environmental policy that takes advantage of what markets and property rights have to offer is a difficult challenge. Members of the environmental and free-market communities must work through each other's legitimate concerns and recommendations. It will take a great deal more debate and discussion, which I hope Mr. Reilly's article will foster.

William H. Mellor III
President
Pacific Research Institute
San Francisco, CA

The Incredible Expanding EPA

Dear Sir:

William K. Reilly comes not to praise capitalism, but to bury it. In his recent article "The Green Thumb of Capitalism," EPA Administrator Reilly demonstrates that he is one of the smoothest political operators in the Republican Party. He can implement the most extreme forms of centralized command-and-control regulations and still coo that he believes in free markets. He can argue that he believes in private property rights even as he works behind the scenes

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to weaken the Fifth Amendment's prohibition against uncompensated governmental takings of property. He can state his support for a strong economy even as he pushes for billions of dollars in unnecessary costs for industry under the new Clean Air Act amendments.

The Environmental Protection Agency that Mr. Reilly heads is aggressively seeking to establish itself as coordinator of a new National Industrial Policy. Mr. Reilly's attitude is that of most "moderate" Repub-licans: central control of the economy is acceptable so long as I am at the center.

The 20-year record of the EPA is a stew of occasional successes, heavily seasoned by major failures and the excessive costs of overregulation. The trends toward environmental improvement—whether air, water, or habitat quality—have not accelerated since the EPA was created and huge sums have been wasted. Consider just a few examples. The EPA asbestos program has increased the previously tiny risk to children and teachers in school buildings with asbestos removal activities. The asbestos program developed by EPA would cost more than $150 billion to implement—about the cost of the savings and loan debacle. With such astronomical costs threatening to bankrupt most of the school systems in America, Mr. Reilly announced that the past several years of EPA asbestos-bashing were misinterpreted by an overreacting public. But despite the evidence, the EPA plans to completely ban asbestos anyway.

Alar Hype

EPA's methods for testing the cancer-causing potential of trace chemicals in the environment are worse than useless. They actually panic citizens into unhealthy behavior. Consider EPA's capitulation to the absurd propaganda from radical environmentalists about a cancer risk to children from residual amounts of Alar on apples. Despite the evidence, EPA banned Alar.

EPA's "devotion" to private property rights is revealed by its efforts to redefine "wetlands" so as to place millions of acres of (dry!) farms and ranches under its bureaucratic thumb. Similarly, Mr. Reilly personally opposes passage of a bill by Senator Steve Symms of Idaho that is nothing more than a reiteration of every citizen's rights under the Fifth Amendment to the Constitution. Before he joined EPA, Mr. Reilly called the Fifth Amendment's protection of private property rights an 18th-century anachronism.

Mr. Reilly's EPA consistently downplays the sunk costs of existing equipment and demands installation of the latest technology. He would mandate specific levels of energy efficiency in every light bulb, appliance, automobile, and utility. Mr. Reilly insists that the savings are universal, yet for some reason they would not be adopted without federal coercion.

The EPA has become more effective at expanding its bureaucratic turf than at protecting either the environment or public health. Mr. Reilly misses no opportunity to enlarge the federal estate at the expense of the economy and the taxpaying consumer. In William Reilly's environmentalism the only safe jobs are those of the federal regulators. The best thing that can be said about Mr. Reilly is that, like the president he so closely resembles, he will be a one-termer.

Kent Jeffreys
Director of Environmental Studies
Competitive Enterprise Institute
Washington, DC

Who will decide what is "good growth" as Mr. Reilly describes it? Who will reconcile competing environmental, social, and economic concerns while anticipating environmental problems rather than reacting to the crisis of the moment?

—William H. Mellor III

EPA-Induced Asceticism

Dear Sir:

William K. Reilly, in an attempt to assuage conservatives' concerns over his management of environmental policy, has hailed biotechnology and quoted St. Francis of Assisi to prove that he champions capitalist solutions to pollution problems and practices gentle stewardship over our earthly dominion. The Bush administration's actual handling of environmental issues, however, justifies conservatives' anxiety.

Ignoring the conclusions of the $530-million, 10-year-long National Acid Precipitation Assessment Project (NAPAP), the White House and EPA have acceded to liberal Democrats' demands that scrubbers be used on aging Midwest coal-fired power plants. This antiquated technology reduces airborne particulates, but produces tons of sludge for disposal. Had Mr. Reilly and Mr. Bush supported sensible, scientific findings on acid rain, they could have championed giving utility companies 10 additional years to comply with stricter air standards, so that aging, dirty power plants could be replaced with systems featuring modern, clean-burn technologies. By caving in to demands for earlier compliance, Mr. Reilly and Mr. Bush will cost some 15,000 workers in the Midwest their jobs and force Ohioans and others to pay substantially higher rates to heat their homes.

In recent times, Mr. Reilly's EPA has threatened my community, Colorado Springs, with heavy fines because of the quality of our Fountain Creek, a waterway whose level of pollution amounts to, in the

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words of one local commentator, a teaspoon of ammonia in a bathtub full of water. The EPA also ordered officials in Pocatello, Idaho, to rip up all of the city's sidewalks because the concrete emits hazardous materials—which may cause risk to an individual pedestrian if he stands in one place for 24 hours. Unsuspecting landowners in Virginia and Pennsylvania have been slapped with lawsuits by the EPA for improving their property in areas that Mr. Reilly's henchmen have declared to be wetlands, even though the regions contain no water, no reeds, no waterfowl.

The Resolution Trust Corporation, thanks to Mr. Reilly's bureaucrats, must insure that each property it tries to sell is environmentally pristine. Excessive capitalization standards and falling real estate values, it seems, are not the only obstacles to federal recovery from the savings and loan crisis. Banks and insurance companies may now be held liable by the EPA for any environmental hazards that are discovered on properties that have come into their possession only by default.

If the EPA continues its current practices, we all may soon seek comfort from St. Bernard and St. Francis to learn what happiness may be attained by living a life of poverty.

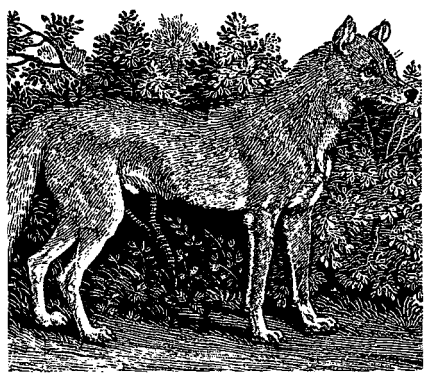
Susan K. Connelly
Colorado Springs, CO

A Wolf in Sheep's Clothing

Dear Sir:

Administrator Reilly, who in a previous incarnation attacked "mainstream attitudes about private property and freedom of action," finds no friends here in the West, notwithstanding his new-found faith in the free-market system. We who are used to dealing with predators can see, beneath the sheep's clothing he creatively labels "sustainable growth," his unchanged and wolfish lust for federal government power. For us, Mr. Reilly's actions and the actions of his agency speak louder than his words.

This is the same Mr. Reilly who within days of taking office heeded demands of national environmental groups and announced he would veto a vital water project for northern Colorado. The project to build a dam and a reservoir was a cooperative effort by 40 local governments—no federal or state money was involved—in which those governments spent decades and $47 million studying the project. They agreed to $90 million in "mitigation" measures—including a three-fold increase in wetlands. Mr. Reilly said he would veto the project, and then set about to find a reason. Mr. Reilly



determined that northern Colorado—where average annual rainfall is less than 15 inches—does not need the water project. The EPA solution: buy water from farmers in northern Colorado, essentially dewatering the region and yielding a dramatic loss in wetlands.

Meanwhile, in the guise of protecting "wetlands," Mr. Reilly and his agency have sought to punish those who use their land. Here in Colorado, Mr. Reilly sued two elderly brothers who shored up an existing levee that for 50 years had kept the adjoining Roaring Fork River in its historic channel. The brothers' action was necessary because during spring runoff the Roaring Fork had flooded 40 acres of their ranch, washing away five feet of precious topsoil over a two-acre area. Mr. Reilly's EPA is seeking $35 million in fines against the brothers for doing what the law permits them to do—protect their land.

Mr. Reilly's call for "sustainable growth" is especially frightening. Who determines what is "sustainable growth"? The agenda beneath Mr. Reilly's free-market-sounding rhetoric is for even more government control. Anyone who has run the gauntlet of the National Environment Policy Act (NEPA), Endangered Species Act, and Clear Water Act (especially §404) must be in a state of apoplexy over the prospect of proving to the EPA that the growth to result from a proposed action is "sustainable."

Mr. Reilly—who attacks constitutionally protected property rights and consistently advocates more and more government regulation—has not suddenly become an advocate of the free-enterprise system and a proponent of less government regulation. He is merely cloaking his call for ever-increasing government regulation in rhetoric with which he hopes to appeal to us conservatives.

William Perry Pendley
President and Chief Legal Officer
Mountain States Legal Foundation
Denver, CO

Sustainable Decline

Dear Sir:

Mr. Reilly shows acuity in his observation that centrally planned, Soviet-style economies are devastating to the environment, but his myopia is evident in his inability to see the same tendency to "central control" within his own Environmental Protection Agency.

Although he correctly observes the lack of environmental stewardship in controlled socialist economies, he fails to explain why. The citizenry of Eastern Europe, struggling with financial survival, is not inclined to consider environmental cleanup a priority. Industries seeking to function under stifling government control lack the profit incentive and the capital for research and development of innovative technologies that lead to greater efficiency in the use of natural resources. Expenditures for environmental improvement are found at the bottom of budget listings in governments that are functioning near the edge of economic collapse.

Let this be a lesson to us, and particularly to Mr. Reilly.

Total expenditures for environmental programs and regulations at all levels of government in the United States today stand at $141.2 billion, or 2.6 percent of our annual GNP. Expenditures per American household for environmental cleanup are now estimated to be $2,025 a year.

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With recent increases that come in the face of an untouched deficit and a slowing economy, the trick becomes how to keep the economy growing so that there will continue to be sufficient funds for environmental housekeeping.

Somehow it is hard to be convinced by Mr. Reilly's words of warning about the ill effects of central control while he heads a massive federal agency comfortable in the role of overall environmental authority.

Is this the same Mr. Reilly who supports the president's plan for government to plant a billion trees in the next 10 years while it increasingly ties the hands of the U.S. timber industry (which has more *real* interest in sound forest management than has government)? The Mr. Reilly who applauds the reallocation of $250 million for the Land and Water Conservation Fund as well as delays in issuing offshore oil drilling leases in California and Florida, even though this means a half a billion dollars' loss in federal revenues?

Need for Science, Not Politics

Is this the same Mr. Reilly who, in a speech before the American Enterprise Institute last August, admitted that much of his agency's work with asbestos was, at best, riddled with errors and had proved unnecessarily expensive in terms of lives and money? The cost of asbestos removal, estimated at $150 billion to $200 billion, rivals the savings and loan bailout. This, though Sir Richard Doll of Oxford University, the world's leading epidemiologist, compared the risk from asbestos in buildings to smoking one-half a cigarette in a lifetime.

Had Mr. Reilly and Mr. Bush supported sensible, scientific findings on acid rain, they could have given utility companies 10 additional years to comply with stricter air standards. By caving in to demands for earlier compliance, they will cost some 15,000 workers in the Midwest their jobs.

—Susan K. Connelly

Mr. Reilly frets that up to half the wetlands that existed when European settlers landed here are now gone. Obviously, many were filled to build homes and factories on solid ground while others were filled to reduce the devastation of insect-borne disease such as encephalitis and malaria. Does he propose that we revert back in time and health?

Sustainable growth has all the resounding ring of the "C" word, "control." Like sustainable agriculture, which raises the price of food and reduces the health effects of good diet, sustainable growth means no rise in the very GNP Mr. Reilly claims he needs to get the environmental job done.

Barbara Keating-Edh
President
Consumer Alert
Modesto, CA

More Than Advocacy

Dear Sir:

I am sure your readers were impressed by the sensible views of EPA Administrator William K. Reilly that economic growth leads to greater protection of the environment.

Lest your readers think that the EPA is actually sympathetic to business, however, they might like to know about the talk that Mr. Reilly gave before the National Press Club at about the time your issue reached your readers. It tells a different story.

Ostensibly, the purpose of the speech was to introduce a new initiative to base environmental priorities more on science. However, during most of the speech, Mr. Reilly emphasized the need for more regulation, more enforcement, and more pressure on business.

For example, Mr. Reilly lauded the Clean Air Act's acid rain provisions, and even called them "cost effective." This differs from the assessment of many analysts, including Brookings economist Robert Crandall, who wrote recently in *Journal of Regulation and Social Costs* that "Congress is opting for a policy that costs hundreds of times more than a simple solution which would have a much more immediate effect on the acidity of northeastern lakes and streams." Mr. Reilly also praised the toxic-air emission initiative of the act, even though that has been roundly criticized, too. Frederick H. Rueter and Wilbur A. Steger say that even if hazardous air pollutants were totally eliminated from major industrial sources (and that is not considered possible), the annual incidence of cancer would be reduced only minimally, by between 0.035 percent and 0.055 percent.

Command and Control

Mr. Reilly cited many regulatory actions during his watch: phasing out asbestos use, reducing exposure to benzene, proposing the cancellation of most uses of the pesticide EBDC, and regulating the volatility of gasoline, among others. Whatever the merits of these activities, they are part of the command-and-control approach to environmental policy that stifles economic growth and directs entrepreneurship into frequently non-productive areas. And in case anyone thinks that regulation will diminish, he noted that he was seeking a 12 percent increase in the EPA's operating fund, and has already added almost 2,000 staff. In fact, EPA recently received a 9 percent increase in funding.

Superfund is perhaps the EPA's most heavily criticized program, even by environmentalists. Congress has created this $10 billion fund from an industry tax, yet the EPA

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can't use it effectively to clean up more than a few sites. Now Mr. Reilly has announced an "enforcement first" priority that is going to use the powers of the law to force companies to take action.

Enforcement of the law is appropriate, of course, but the flaws of Superfund are egregious, and the liability aspects of the law are among its most unfair. As Mr. Reilly's chief enforcement officer, James Strock, has written in the pages of *Policy Review* (Summer 1988), any single disposer of hazardous substances may be held responsible for the cleanup of an entire site, "irrespective of fault, causal link to the environmental harm in question, or the number of additional parties who also may have contributed to the site in question, or the fact that the disposal at issue occurred prior to the passage of Superfund (perhaps even in compliance with then-existing requirements)." Is hounding business the proper foundation of EPA policy?

Near the end of the speech, Mr. Reilly advocated recycling 25 percent of all solid waste by 1992. Completely contradicting his earlier statement that he wants "sound science" to help establish priorities, he latched on to the popular notion that waste should be recycled rather than incinerated or placed in landfills. Experts know that the "solid waste crisis" is largely a myth, and that recycling, while it has a place, is not inherently better or even always more environmentally benign than other ways of dealing with waste. And when it's the EPA administrator talking, "advocacy" means more than talk—he promised to push recycling through"proposed rules on municipal waste combustors and other initiatives," that is, more command and control.

Jane S. Shaw
Senior Associate
Political Economy Research Center
Bozeman, MT

Free Markets Know Best

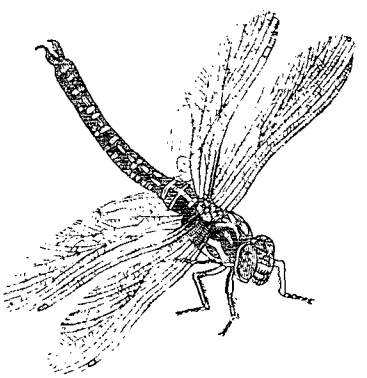
Dear Sir:

William K. Reilly is quite right to point out that a healthy environment and a healthy economy go hand in hand. But he misses the mark when he premises his environmental policy on sustainable growth, that is, "growth consistent with the needs and constraints of nature." This goal entails securing "the link between environmental and economic policies at all levels of government and in all sectors of the economy." Such governmental securing, however, is likely to come at tremendous costs to the economy—costs that detract from the health of the environment.

U.S. environmental policy is already based on the command-and-control approach. We don't need more of it under the guise of sustainable growth. The government typically requires specific solutions to environmental problems, giving polluters little leeway or incentive to find more appropriate ways. The Clean Air Act, for example, requires utilities to install scrubbers on smokestacks to reduce sulfur emissions, even though scrubbers are largely ineffective. By requiring a specific "fix," the utilities had no incentive to devise more appropriate technology. In fact, they are hindered from doing so. Why invest money in developing alternatives when the law simply requires scrubbers?

Mr. Reilly puts great faith in the marvels of technology largely in response to the advances in bioremediation demonstrated in the Exxon *Valdez* cleanup. He says he has urged biotechnology companies to give a high priority to developing other environmental applications. Urging, however, will likely go unheeded as long as existing regulations stifle incentives for action. Public relations comprise the prime motivation for companies to invest in environmental technology so they can advertise themselves as "green." We need to create incentives for companies to invest in pollution mitigation technology as a routine part of doing business and eliminate incentives that hinder such investments. For example, under Superfund regulations, anyone who has ever been remotely involved with a toxic site can be required to pay the entire cleanup costs. These costs can be assessed on the company's ability to pay, rather than the volume or toxicity of their waste contribution. In contrast, if companies are required to be responsible for their actual contribution, there would be greater incentive to develop and adopt the least-polluting approach.

Mr. Reilly also relies on technological developments to provide an information base to respond appropriately to environmental problems. Such technology already exists and it is a relatively simple fix—the market. We can foster markets if we allow natural and environmental resources, such as



wildlife, to be privately owned. In freely functioning markets, prices reflect changing resource scarcity. When resources become more scarce, their prices go up. When they become more abundant, prices go down. These changes occur gradually, giving people abundant time to respond appropriately—all without sophisticated technology. Unfortunately, technology is often used when markets could achieve better results at much less cost. For example, in water-short California, local officials are using expensive mapping technologies to pinpoint people who are using more than their share of water. Appropriate water pricing would be more efficient. If people had to pay the value of water, we'd see fewer water-loving crops, such as alfalfa, and fewer fields flooded with standing water.

Mr. Reilly has made an important contribution in pointing out that economic growth can provide the wealth for investing in environmental protection. Instead of trying to harness and regulate that growth by pursuing the vague concept of "sustainable growth," however, he

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should recognize and promote the value of the free market for its ability to fuel both strong economies and healthy environmental stewardship.

Jo Kwong
Director of Public Affairs
Atlas Economic Research
Foundation
Fairfax, VA

Environment for Everyone

Dear Sir:

It is disheartening to read ideological cliché rather than rationally consistent policy in a statement by the nation's chief environmental policymaker.

Interestingly, like many writers for *Policy Review*, Mr. Reilly shares with the Marxists they revile empirically aberrant economic determinism that prevents fruitful agency initiative. Their sequence of ecologic causation opposes reality. As Mr. Reilly notes in one inconsistent moment of clarity, good environmental policy enables good economic policy, not vice versa. Mr. Reilly sees a correlation between rising income (via his brand of economic determinism) and environmental concern.

However, the World Resources Institute points to a poll taken in developing countries demonstrating wide-spread concern about the quality of the environment. Large majorities believe that their environments became worse in the past decade and that stronger action should be taken by government. EPA's own polls show the high concerns found among American workers, especially union workers. And a study I conducted (with Ido deGroot) many years ago in Erie County, New York, found that the perception of air pollution *decreased* with rising socioeconomic status.

The largest single voice for our system of national parks was the CIO (Congress of Industrial Organizations). The first national organization to call a national meeting in defense of the air we must all breathe was the United Steelworkers of America. The countries whose governments are most militant on issues of the environment are the socialist countries of Scandinavia.

"Environment" is an issue for all the people, and the wisdom of the people is not a captive of ideology.

Sheldon W. Samuels
Industrial Union Department
AFL-CIO
Washington, DC

William K. Reilly replies:

In my September 26 speech to the National Press Club, to which two of your writers refer, I called for a "robust national dialogue" on the nation's environmental agenda. It's encouraging to see this kind of dialogue taking place in the pages of *Policy Review*.

It seems to me that most of the commentary on my article, while discussing a wide range of specific issues ranging from asbestos to Superfund to wetlands protection, suggests a need for more objective, rational standards against which the nation's pursuit of its environmental goals can be measured.

The American people, through their support of environmental legislation at all levels of government over the past 20 years, have made it clear that they expect—indeed, demand—a substantial government role in the protection of public health and safety and the restoration of environmental quality. Thus the EPA's establishment and expansion is less an exercise in bureaucratic empire-building than a reflection of the growth of those public expectations over the last two decades.

Sound Governance

Government clearly has a responsibility to carry out the public's environmental commitments—but sound governance also imposes an obligation to do so in a way that minimizes intrusions into the private sector, assures cost-effectiveness of environmental expenditures, and reduces any negative impact on the nation's economic health. As William Mellor points out, *some* trade-offs among environmental, social, and economic goals are inevitable. In making these trade-offs, government must strive to strike the right chord—protecting human health and the environment on one hand, and ensuring sound, sustainable economic growth on the other. That is the kind of balance the Bush administration insisted upon in its negotiations with Congress on the Clean Air Act, and it will continue to be the guiding principle for our environmental proposals.

The EPA fully recognizes the need to reconcile environmental protection and economic growth. Far from plotting to "control the economy" or to devise a centralized National Industrial Policy (an amusing notion—even if we wanted to, such a scheme is far beyond anything we're capable of pulling off), the agency has been devoting much of its creative energy in recent years to developing flexible, cost-effective new programs to address the increasingly complex environmental problems of the 1990s. These problems, whose sources are often smaller in scale, more widespread and diffuse than the industrial or municipal facilities targeted in the first round of environmental legislation, include: acid rain, urban smog, and other ambient air pollution; municipal and hazardous wastes; toxic substances in the air and water; pollution of streams, lakes, and groundwater from agricultural and urban runoff; drinking water contamination; ecological concerns such as habitat alteration and destruction, species extinction, and loss of genetic diversity; and global atmospheric disruptions: ozone depletion and climate change.

To come to grips with these vexing problems, the nation's environmental policies are evolving in three fundamental ways:

1) From a traditional reliance on prescriptive, command-and-control regulations to a much stronger emphasis on the use of economic incentives and market forces to achieve environmental gains (the emissions-trading provision of the new Clean Air Act is an example). The command-and-control approach has accomplished a great deal in cleaning up the most obvious and dangerous sources of pollution; and regulatory controls will continue to play an important role in environmental protection, correcting for the inability of unregulated markets to account for the environmental costs of energy extraction and use, and of the production and disposal of industrial products. But we now recognize that by themselves, technology-based regulations

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are no longer sufficient to get the job done. They are of limited value in dealing with pollution from small, widely scattered sources. And in some cases, as Jo Kwong rightly notes, they can be counterproductive—inhibiting innovation or discouraging regulated industries from going beyond minimum legal requirements. Traditional regulation and enforcement must be supplemented with flexible programs that can harness the power of the marketplace on behalf of the environment.

2) From *ex post facto* efforts to control and clean up waste to a strong thrust toward preventing pollution *before* it becomes a problem. Examples include the voluntary efforts by nine major petrochemical manufacturers, undertaken last year at EPA's urging, to reduce toxic air emissions substantially through process changes and materials substitution; and a similar toxic reduction initiative now being pursued with emitters of 17 especially troublesome chemicals nationwide.

3) From narrowly focused, single-medium (air, water, land) pollution control toward coordinated programs that view all environmental media as a whole, seeking the most appropriate points and methods of intervention to protect natural systems and to reduce overall exposures to toxic substances from *all* sources and routes of exposure. Two contaminants, dioxin and lead, along with serious pollution problems in the Great Lakes, are being addressed through this multimedia "cluster" approach.

The impetus for these new approaches is a firm belief that environmental policy should, with the resources available, achieve the greatest possible reductions in risk—risk both to human health and to the integrity of productive natural systems. As I said in my speech to the National Press Club, risk is a common metric that can help us distinguish the environmental heart attacks and broken bones from indigestion or bruises. Comparative risk assessment is one of the best indicators we have of where we should be directing our resources.

I say this knowing full well that environmental risk assessment remains an inexact science at best, one that must incorporate a great deal of uncertainty. Rarely do we have enough information to make unequivocal, unambiguous decisions about risk. Most of our conclusions about human health risks, for example, are based on debatable assumptions and projections, which may or may not accurately predict human health effects. But while we often do not have the kind of scientific data we would like, we also do not have the luxury of waiting for this data to arrive before we take action. Based on what we *do* know, the EPA must, and will, take a cautious, protective approach until

we are convinced of lesser risk as we learn more about the effects of toxic substances on human cells and ecosystems and the mechanisms by which harm is caused.

As scientific knowledge advances, the EPA is constantly updating its risk assessments; we are insisting that they be subjected to rigorous internal and external peer review; and we are looking for ways to achieve greater consistency in our use of risk assessments across the range of EPA decisionmaking. As the science of risk evolves, we also have an obligation to *share* this new information with the public. The public has the right to know which risks are regarded as serious by the government, and which are not, and why.

Greater reliance on science, then, can help the EPA, the Congress, and the public to establish priorities and allocate resources based on risk. Obviously other important factors go into setting our priorities—public values and perceptions, economic issues—but rigorous science remains our most reliable compass in a turbulent sea of environmental policy. Science can lend much-needed coherence, order, and integrity to the often costly and controversial decisions that must be made.

Economic prosperity and growth are essential to meet the political and social challenges of the 1990s; and so is continued environmental progress. As George C. Eads, chief economist for General Motors, wrote in a recent paper on sustainable development: "To be successful, (environmental) improvements must...keep pace with ...economic growth. The environmental progress of one decade or generation must provide a basis for further progress in the next." I couldn't agree more.

Reining Congress

Dear Sir:

In "Bad Housekeeping: The Case Against Congressional Term Limitations" (Summer 1990), Charles R. Kesler argues against term limitations of congressmen on the grounds that constitutional tampering should be approached with caution, and he asserts that congressmen can be voted out of office at the will of the public.

Mr. Kesler's confidence in the opportunity of the public to replace incumbent national politicians "with but the flick of a lever" crumbles in the face of reality. The dearth of substantial opposition to the vast majority of incumbents effectively bars a realistic opportunity to achieve meaningful turnover in Washington.

Political candidates are not grown in test tubes, nor do they stand like soldiers in rank, waiting for party officials to pick from among them the political soldier to be thrown against the enemy in political battle.

Political candidates are real people who are engaged in careers to enhance their financial security, and who have family obligations that do not evaporate upon entering a political contest. Of equal importance, few qualified candidates will want to challenge an incumbent knowing that his or her chances are in the range of one in 50!

It is quite enough to ask someone

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to accept the hardships and rigors of a political campaign when the odds are approximately even. To ask someone to interrupt or terminate his career and accept the hazards of campaigning when the effort is quixotic at best is asking more than we have a right to.

A four-term limitation for House members would ensure that a meaningful debate on political philosophy could occur every eight years in each congressional district, between candidates of somewhat equal opportunities of success. A two-term limitation for the Senate would guarantee the same opportunities every 12 years in each state.

One of the greatest benefits of limiting terms would be to open the opportunity for service to thousands of potential candidates who cannot consider a political career under today's circumstances.

The greater availability of candidates would ensure more lively political contests, and the raising of a greater number of issues during campaigns than now exists.

The presence of members of Congress who are not totally dependent upon their political careers for their financial security would permit the exercise of that quality known as statesmanship. At the current time we are constantly exposed to calls for the members of the legislative branch to put aside their concerns for reelection and act in the best interests of the country. Such demands are unrealistic when congressmen have burned their financial bridges to their civilian pursuits, making their political careers their sole source of security.

Ben B. Blackburn
Member, 90th-93rd Congress
(R-GA)
Decatur, GA

Joint Chiefs Not Fathers of SDI

Dear Sir:

The article by Donald R. Baucom on how Star Wars came into being (Summer 1990) is aptly entitled "The Untold History of Reagan's SDI Decision." Mr. Baucom seriously understates the role of Ronald Reagan himself and his chief national security advisor, William Clark.

Mr. Baucom ignores the key December 1982 meeting between President Reagan and the Joint Chiefs where Reagan, not the Joint Chiefs or any of his advisers, brought up the issue of missile defense and *then ordered* the Chiefs to proceed.

In fact, Reagan confirmed his decisive role in SDI in an interview I had with him in July 1989:

> I called a meeting of the Chiefs of Staff in the Cabinet Room, and I said, look, every weapon that's ever been created in the world had resulted in a defense, a defensive weapon—the sword and later the shield. Isn't it—with our technology—possible that we could produce a system that could hit those missiles as they came out of their silos, using space, whatever?
>
> They kind of huddled for a minute, then they came back and they said could you give us a couple of days on that? I said yes. And in a couple of days they came back. And they said yes, we think it is worthwhile.... So I said, all right—we start. Go to it. And so we started that plan.

It was William Clark who initiated this meeting and then followed up with the Joint Chiefs—not Robert McFarlane. McFarlane got his orders to work on it from Clark, *after* Reagan had decided to go.

McFarlane and George Keyworth, contrary to being prime movers of the idea, were reluctant at first, and it was only after Reagan gave the order to do it and Clark passed it on that they both developed a certain degree of enthusiasm for missile defense.

Mr. Baucom's intent seems to be to show his military colleagues in a good light regardless of what actually happened. Perhaps the Joint Chiefs of the early 1980s are somewhat embarrassed that the idea of a protective missile defense system for the United States was rammed down their throats by civilians—but that's the way it was.

Martin Anderson
Hoover Institution
Stanford, CA

Donald R. Baucom replies:

Mr. Anderson and I agree on the two most crucial points. First, on February 11, 1983, the Joint Chiefs of Staff unanimously recommended to President Reagan that the U.S. pursue a strategy that would place more emphasis on strategic defense. Second, this recommendation was an important milestone in the decision process that led to the birth of SDI. There is no question about either of these basic points. Indeed, as Mr. Anderson wrote in his book *Revolution* (1988 edition): "Less than six weeks into the new year (February 11, 1983) the Joint Chiefs met with President Reagan and recommended to him that the United States abandon its complete dependence on the old doctrine of mutually assured destruction and move ahead with the research and development of a missile defense system. The Joint Chiefs thus confirmed the validity of an idea that Reagan had been thinking about for almost four years. *Now* [italics added] things began to happen quickly."

When President Reagan made his decision to initiate the SDI program, he did so backed by a unanimous position from the chiefs, a position he learned of during the meeting in February. In view of the fiasco over the dense pack basing mode for the MX, which involved a split among the chiefs—a split that surfaced in December 1982—it was crucial that Reagan have this unanimous support before announcing the new SDI program.

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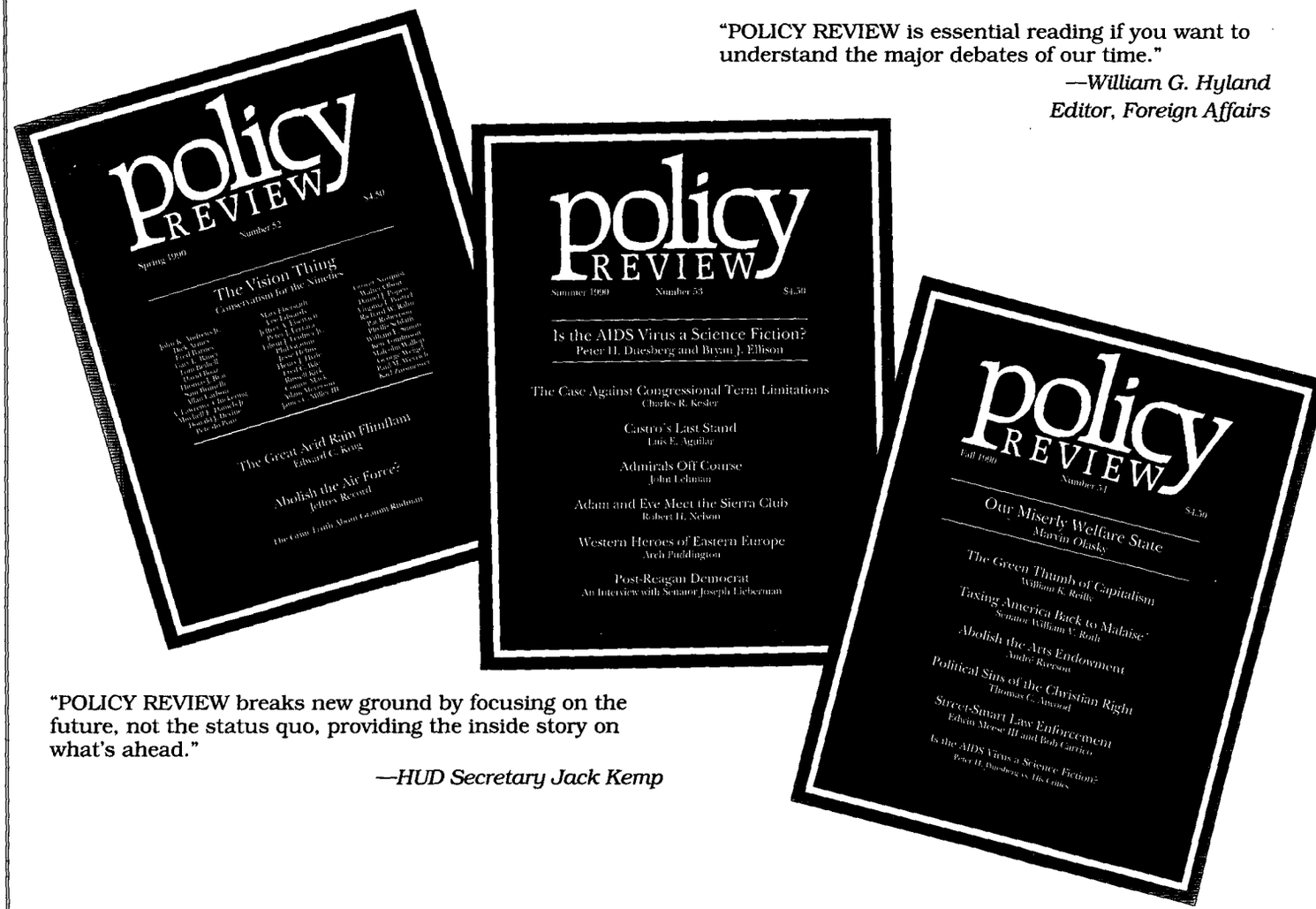

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My emphasis on limiting spending rather than raising taxes is not simply a question of honoring my campaign pledge. It's also a matter of my own personal philosophy: I don't believe in writing a check until the money's in the bank, and I don't believe in wasteful spending.

Governor Douglas Wilder
Low-Tax Liberal:
An Interview by Adam Meyerson

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